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What's What

IN

KENYA HIGHLANDS

Their Pioneering Romance and Colonising Possibilities.

By W. S. BROMHEAD, F.R.C.I.,
(OLD ALLEYNIAN)
FROM THE BOER WAR TO THE GERMAN WAR
SPECIALIST IN LAND SETTLEMENT WITH HEADQUARTERS IN LONDON
DELEGATE TO CONVENTION OF ASSOCIATIONS IN KENYA FOR THE DAGORETTI FARMERS' ASSOCIATION, 1921-22-23.

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FOREWORD.

The following chapters, which originally appeared as articles in the *East African Standard* daily and weekly editions, and have therefore passed through the fire of local criticism, took fifteen months to collect.

These months have comprised a delightful, if also at times a somewhat arduous, experience. They leave the writer more than ever a confirmed lover of Kenya; from the high mountains where, at dawn, the gray mists creep up like elephants' breath through the dripping forests, changing with the sunrise into adult, stately clouds, to the immense lakes and spacious grass-covered plains with the graceful white ibises accompanying the depasturing cattle—all good native herds are translated into white ibises when they die—as at Ndibibi. Of the vast native and game Reserves or the northern desert country little is said here; for they hardly come within the scope of this book, already larger than was originally anticipated, which mainly devotes itself to the achievements of the white pioneer.

Nevertheless, the writer knows enough of those areas to wish to know more. He can at any rate recommend those on the look-out for novel and memorable sensations to spend a day or two entirely alone, just tramping and camping amongst the game and the grass and the sunlight on one or other of Kenya's immense open areas. There, where the heat waves dance for ever, it is well at times to lie and watch. In due course the air undulations pass away and ghosts take shape, in endless array, of all the innumerable animals, great and small, that have been begotten, nurtured and died on these mighty stretches. Across the horizon they come trotting and lumbering over their old feeding grounds. One can pick out the cumbersome gallop of eongoni and giraffe—whose heads tow or above them all—the neater canter of Zebra and buck, the low, swift sprinting of lion, and the moving bulk of rhino or elephant. Even bigger, weirder shadows of pre-historic animals may be distinguished; until one is persuaded that the physical life of these primeval plains is, after all only a very temporary expression of the eternal sun radiations that sweep daily over them; and death but a natural homing from a brief excursion into materialistic individualism.

Speaking with some knowledge of the British Empire, the writer can recall no work since the Doomsday Book that deals comprehensively and connectedly with the local rural development of any colony or state during its first generation of settlement; namely, when most of the original pioneers were still living.

What epics of happy human endeavour and evolutionary racial expansion, what healthy inspirations of daring-do and natural life have been lost to mankind by this omission. This phase of life even had its prose marching songs; now all forgotten. It is many years ago and thousands of miles away from Kenya that the writer first heard from the quivering voice of an octogenarian, whose dull eyes flashed again as he sang the simple doggerel of what, in the time

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The Settler of last century ?) was doubtless a favourite migra[illegible] Kenya's Highlands have brought back once more [illegible] memory this refrain that many an Anglo-Saxon pioneer chanted t[illegible] his long-haired mate as they trekked south-west with their prairi[illegible] schooners in the days of America's spaciousness:—

> And you will milk and sew,
> "Oh, I shall plough and mow,
> And we'll settle on the banks of the pleasant Ohio,
> Where we'll hunt the buffalo,
> Aye, we'll hunt the buffalo!"

Much more of it I forget; but there was a note of homeliness and noble simplicity running through the rhyme that puts to shame the complex sentiments of modern life—whose ideas of migration are perhaps characteristically portrayed by "Goodbye Piccadilly, goodbye Leicester Square"; which sounds like the keening of Lot's wife. Even the sturdier manliness of Australia's expansionist folk-songs miss the happy domestic note, as for example:—

> "When we washed our greasy moleskins on the banks
> of the Diamantine."

In this respect, therefore, the volume herewith submitted to the public is perhaps unique; and the writer is grateful indeed for the good fortune that has led him to become the chronicler of what may very well prove to be the last Anglo-Saxon colony creatable under the present era or dispensation. Already the bureaucratic and sentimental negation of the natural laws of racial expansion and human evolution have had three-quarters of a century's precedent and growth in officially controlled India and elsewhere. This factor is to-day reinforced by a dangerous, pseudo-Christianity, and the short-sighted intrigues, of Mammon, assisted by the most foolish and illogical form of spurious benevolence ever devised on a national scale. As a result, the seeds of chaos and disaster are being diligently sown by forcing the increase and local mastership of the unripe races on the earth under artificial and hothouse methods; while any adequate influx of the politically, industrially and mentally mature members of our own race, who alone are able to lead the former safely and naturally upwards, is steadily discouraged and suppressed under the pitiful plea of native trusteeship; which translated means a unprofitable and prodigal stagnation until the specially created native agitator can take over the spoliation of his fellow racial.

The only true solution of the problem really lies, of course, in the open door—nay, an active encouragement—for law-abiding members of the organising, wealth-creating civilian sections of the white race, and a just, kindly welding together on the spot of their material interests and qualities with those of the backward indigenous peoples; a desideratum by no means impossible to encompass. But the progress of the British Empire to-day, and especially those portions that do not possess an adequate, local, unprivileged work-a-day, self-governing, white population, is increasingly obstructed and submerged by a flood of uneconomic busy-bodies, faddists and cushy-job hunters.

Of the settlers themselves—the pity is their numbers are so small—amongst whom the writer has been privileged to move, one

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cannot fail to note the high average of novices who, prior to co
to Kenya, were ignorant of both pioneering life and work. It is sere
to say that no other dominion has ever before been started by a
population composed of so large a proportion of amateurs; and great
credit is therefore due to those Kenyans who, in spite of their natural
handicaps, have struggled through to success. This, while speaking
volumes for the easy conditions of life in Kenya, has, however,
undoubtedly contributed its inevitable effect in retarding the colony's
material prosperity and progress. With few exceptions, these
settlers have shown themselves charmingly cordial and hospitable to
the writer; and the diversity of their antecedents, combined with
their high standard of intelligence, has undoubtedly helped materially
in making the record, incorporated in the following pages, a labour of
pleasure. They have time after time received him with an unreserve
that proves them to be amongst those who are prepared to entertai
graciously any stranger that will pass their way, lest perchance they
might on some occasion show discourtesy to an angel unaware.

A big proportion of the manhood of Kenya is trained to arms;
many are veterans of the late war; a number are old professio
soldiers with world-wide experience of their trade. The time m ay yet
arise when Britain, largely due to her policy of helping the 'foreigner'
the alien and less worthy amongst the peoples of the earth, o
preference to her own people, will have need of their services again
and with that lack of vindictiveness for past affronts and neglect
characteristic of the British soldier, they will probably respond as
before. Meantime, success to them in their peaceful pursuits, and
may they realise more thoroughly than they do at present, the
importance of increasing their numbers, both through the gates of
birth and Mombasa. Administratively speaking, it is as well not to
heavily with them; and other disgruntled or
hostile sections of the ... to leave them alone. To
borrow from and slightly transpose the poet of our late enemy
by quoting some of the most sonorous w... ravages in the human tongue:

"Da werden sie liegen und horchen still
Wie eine Schildwach im grabe,
Bis einst sie hören canonengebrachl,
Und wiehernde Rossen getrabe."

W. S. BROMHEAD.

Mbagathi, Nairobi.

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CHAPTER I.

A Causerie on Climates with an explanation of special reference to the Equatorial Temperateness in Kenya; followed by a brief account of Nairobi with descriptions of districts and typical farms in its neighbourhood.

Familiarity and, in many instances, paucity of previous experience of overseas' countries, can alone explain the lack of appreciation that quite a proportion of their white inhabitants exhibit towards the marvellous Highlands of British East Africa. But there is fortunately an ever-growing number that does realise the superlatively choice, if not unrivalled, qualities of its adopted home.

The Homeborn.

On one hand is to be met a strong, but, I believe, a decreasing section of the European community, usually consisting of people coming straight out from urban Britain, which is handicapped by preconceived notions that it has reached a fiercely tropical land, and maintains the illusion that it is immured in a death trap. Life is a perpetual romance of hair-breadth escapes to these folk. They believe that they move amidst the continually imminent dangers of deadly disease, giant carnivorous animals ready to pop out on the exotic resident or traveller from behind every bush, a plague of indescribably obnoxious insects, blood-thirsty and menacing natives anxiously waiting for an opportunity to annihilate them, and a malevolent sun that simply bludgeons to the grave anyone who dares to undertake useful or remunerative physical work.

In their opinion luckily exists, however, by the mercy of Providence, a miraculous amnesty towards all white people who will exclusively confine their more strenuous exertions to useless and uneconomic forms of labour. Tennis, football, polo, golf and cricket are admitted to be harmless and indeed necessary to health; or one may trapse over the veldt, even carrying a gun, day after day, and no harm result.

But don't let old Sol catch you bending your back to spadework in your garden, pruning your fruit and coffee trees, rounding up your stock on horseback, milking your own cows, or assisting to sow and harvest your own crops; or an order for a box ornamented with brass tacks and a metal inscription plate, is likely to be placed on your behalf with the Nairobi Municipality at an early date.

The Colonial.

On the other hand, is to be found rather more than a sprinkling of men who have spent years of their lives in other new and more strenuous countries; and who cannot praise the natural advantages of Kenya sufficiently. It includes all the leading Anglo-Saxon varieties, *e.g.*, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, Canadians and Americans; or men familiar by long residence with the countries of those people. And it is but the

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Bare truth to say that the main attractions that the Colony exerts on them are the surprising temperateness of its climate, the general easiness and healthfulness of its life, the greenness and fertility of its countryside and the mild, friendly beauty and ever-changing diversity of its landscapes. There is in addition a small proportion of men from the old Country, composed of persons who have either been trained to physical toil before they migrated or are unusually adaptable, that finds little difficulty in accommodating itself to the change in environment and working steadily in it.

The Return.

Others having once or twice shaken the dust of their feet off against Kenya, loudly declaiming their intention to favour some other part of the earth with their presence and never return to so abominable a place, have, to the surprise of their friends, suddenly appeared again in the course of a few months. These are as a rule sadder, wiser, and very reticent individuals; and it is difficult to get at the causes of their disillusionment, though it seems generally primarily to concern the absence of "Jeeves" in other lands. Whatever the reason for their volte face, their minds have become definitely fixed to the view that Kenya is good enough for them to spend the rest of their lives in.

An interesting and informative study is to note the attitude of veterans with years of practical life behind them in one or other of the great Dominions, yet who have made their homes in Kenya; because they, of all men, are the best judges of colonial conditions. There is probably no exaggeration in saying that they are unanimous in considering the Colony an improvement on the places where they spent their earlier life. And certainly one never hears of a Kenyan going to and staying contentedly in any other colony.

These colonials may not do a vast amount of physical work themselves in Kenya, for they are usually old enough to be supervising labour even in a white country. Also there are really few exceptions to the rule that men do not toil unduly themselves if they can get others to work for them. Yet they are invariably active men; they are steady, reliable and persistent progressives also, who glory in utilitarian activity and regard it as the secret of their health under the Equator. And they do know, from a thorough grounding in practical life, what work is and how to do it. In consequence, they are better masters and more efficiently served by their natives than the bulk of men, not having had their training, can hope to be. To these acclimatised, worldly-wise colonists who, with a proportion of naturally adaptable, land-loving and industrious men from Britain, form the salt of Kenya's white population, there is no drawback, whether of climate, insect pests, labour, sickness, or physical disabilities that cannot be matched and surpassed by the same or equivalent hardships on a greater scale in the lands they have deserted.

To them the sine qua non to the adequate appreciation of this rich country is a minimum of three to five years for every young man intending to settle here of strenuous, unprivileged livelihood-earning on the soil in one of our white Dominions; and preferably a sub-tropical one — in which the convenient coloured man is absent—such as Queensland or North Island, New Zealand.

But even if an intending settler has only put in a season or two in Western Canada he will be in a better position for comparison than the Home man. He will for instance have had to work under a mosquito net to keep off the sensual

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inundation of these insect songsters, which emerge in the spring in such multitudes as to change the very colour of the local horses when they settle on them; and to drive the cattle in their madness right through the smoke fires that have to be lit for their protection.

That experience will enable him to appreciate the wonderful immunity of Kenyan highlands from similar penances; even as the newcomer from Australia's pastoral areas, where the menace of the common housefly, in his millions, looms larger than an invasion of carnivorous man-eating creatures in East Africa, will at once note the scarcity of that human enemy, not to mention scorpions, centipedes, tarantulas and poisonous snakes, which are fifty-fold more numerous and troublesome in many settled parts of the Commonwealth. Then there is the Barcoo rot, a complaint that eats the flesh off men's hands and legs, in the dry inland plains of Australia, like a rodent cancer, with a virulence surpassing Kenya's most persevering veldt sores. Such comparisons are sometimes unavoidable; but they are unpleasant, for many white men love all these lands and thank God for their spaciousness, their freedom and their illimitable opportunities.

Some half-a-dozen times, as thousands of others have done, I passed in the pre-war era, through the Red Sea and Indian Ocean backwards and forwards to the Antipodes; and it required the great upheaval of 1914 to bring me to the shores of East Africa and thence to the Highlands proper. Though all my life I have been consumed with an insatiable desire to investigate new and especially undeveloped lands, it had never occurred to me that somewhere behind the sun-dried forbidding igneous cliffs of Somaliland and the coral, coconut or mangrove clad coast of Eastern Africa, lay a serene, healthy, temperate and remarkably beautiful whiteman's country.

Like the bulk of other restless mortals whose destiny has led them for their sins to roam around the earth, I firmly believed in the general maxim that the nearer one approaches the Equator the hotter and more unhealthy are, of necessity, the conditions of life and climate; even as the general belief has always been that the closer one goes to the North Pole the colder and more inhospitable must be the icy wilderness.

Yet I knew better than many that pioneering humanity, drifting ever further north in the great lone land of Western Canada, has made remarkable discoveries, disconcertingly disturbing all sweeping conventional views on the subject of climate. Since I first knew Canada the wheat line has been moved north a thousand miles; for the length of the summer day in higher latitudes seems to compensate for the shorter growing season. And now has arisen an original thinker and practical explorer, one Steffanson by name, who tells us that the uninhabitable arctic is all a myth; that in Montana, Manitoba and Dakota men and women are to-day already living unconcernedly, and children going to school, in a winter temperature many degrees colder than that to be found at the North Pole. That both for residential purposes and food production, Canada's barren lands—give a dog a bad name and hang him—will excel Argentina; and that human settlement is going to spread in the next fifty years to the utmost territorial limits of that hitherto condemned country. The Pole itself, unfortunately, is, however, unlikely to form an eligible site for an important city as it happens to be situate on drifting ice.

As to the Equator.

The relevancy to the Equator of Steffanson's discoveries and theories concerning the North is, it seems to me, apparent. For years my mind

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been groping after some reasonable explanation of certain confusing climatic conditions of the earth; and this clever Canadian gives the clue and partially clears up my difficulties. On one occasion only I reached the edge of the barren lands north-east of Edmonton. The time of the year was towards the end of July; and instead of the frozen lichen and stunted bog moss that one expects there lay an expanse of rolling grasslands indistinguishable from the prairies of the south, interspersed with flowers of which my memory recalls vividly a wonderful red tulip. I have also been in both Winnipeg and Calgary when the thermometer had sunk to well below seventy degrees of freezing point, Fahrenheit; though a Chinook wind from the West in the latter place rolling the frozen air back like a wave, replaced it with the mild air of the Pacific at a temperature of 50 or 60 above zero; causing a jump of about 100 degrees in a few hours.

So it seems my experiences in these two cities justify a claim to having endured the inhospitalities of a climate severer than the North Pole. This in turn leads one to the conclusion that if the arrangements of Nature in her delicately adjusted scheme of terrestrial physical, and climatic compensation, fixes the greatest extremes of cold around the sixtieth degree of latitude instead of where ill-informed humanity has always believed it to be it may be logically calculated that the earth's greatest heat will be found along the twentieth line or between that and the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Look up the map and you will find that this imaginary division passes through some of the most noted of hot places outside of Hades. They include the Sahara desert, the Kalihari, Northern, Mexico, the Deccan, Iquique and much of Central Australia.

After all latitude simply resembles the seasons in this; for the year's official longest and shortest days do do not coincide with, but precede, respectively the sultriest and most wintry months.

Un-Equatorial Africa.

In my early days of travel, especially after a summer or two in Australian harvest fields, I shrank from the idea of the Equator—even as a lad fresh from home to the lumber camps of Manitoba might picture to himself shudderingly the awfulness of Polar Cold. Yet I had already borne sun and heat surpassing in intensity any truly tropical place and certainly anything the Kenyan Highlands can produce. I remember one particular Australian summer, when even the Test matches had to be postponed; for it created a chronic, semi-delirious effect on me that lasted off and on for months. Crops to the area of several hundred acres had to be cut. Though sown to come in at different times the appalling heat brought them along quicker than was expected; and for weeks I sat my reaper and binder on a treeless plain, lunching on my machine and bringing down my 15 to 20 acres daily from dawn often into the moonlit night, bathed in a sun temperature that was for hours constantly in the neighbourhood of 168 deg., but reaching a maximum of 175 deg. in the hottest day of that year. I also know something of Bourke and the South Queensland border, where 129 deg. in the shade is often registered; of Marble Bar in Western Australia, where the average daily maximum shade temperature is about 110 deg. for the year; and I have walked down the streets of both Melbourne and Sydney when brickfielders from the interior were blowing; and, though in hard physical training at the flower of manhood's vigorous strength and health, have wondered whether I could hold out for a few more minutes without collapsing.

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The Bogies.

That the tropics have their peculiarities requiring study; their dangers that must be respectfully handled; their diseases that must be warded off or grappled by a combination of scientific treatment and commonsense; will be frankly admitted. But great neat, such as white people, including women and children, have become acclimatised to in places much further away from the Equator than Kenya, is not the supreme difficulty that imagination and conventional report would have it, even at sea-level. The near future is going to clear the mental fogginess of civilised mankind on the matter, and facilitate human expansion by eliminating two traditional bogies, which, like spells, have scared and held back humanity for centuries. One is the uselessness and uninhabitable character of the Artic regions, and the other is the deadly torridity of all areas within the geographical tropics.

Nature, understanding our intellectual weakness and self-hypnotic tendencies, has, with motherly intuition, made us live in both materially colder and hotter regions than those which, with a mental faith worthier of a higher cause, we have condemned as too extreme to sustain our variety of life; and has now at last drawn back the curtain, showing the actual position. Sane living, moderation in all things, protection from disease, constant exercise, not necessarily of an unremunerative nature; clean air, wholesome sleep, a cheerful mind, and suitable food; these, or the lack of them, are the things that make or mar climates, even more than temperature; and future generations will reduce them to clear-cut formulae.

Meantime, man has at length made the discovery that two universal factors profoundly modify the conditions of climate anywhere; and they are, firstly, altitude and, secondly, proximity to the influence of the sea and breezes arising therefrom.

Certainly the remarkably mild, healthy and pleasant character of Kenya Colony highlands, especially from around Nairobi to Victoria Nyanza, bears out the opinion that these factors are all important; being quite able to modify, accentuate or minimise the evil powers of concentrated sun strength, whether at the North Pole or on the Equator. And so we come to the fact that though the vertical rays beat direct on one's head at Nairobi, where the altitude is 5,500 feet, necessitating a strong hat, the maximum recorded sun temperature is 150 deg., and the maximum shade 80 deg.: the minimum being 100 deg. and 40 deg. respectively.

(a) Survey of Nairobi's Environs.

Twenty-year-old Nairobi grew by accident into the conglomeration of human beings and buildings that forms a town because it was the last flat area on the last plain on which the stores and equipment of the Uganda Railway might be assembled before the rich mountainous highlands proper could be tackled by the construction parties. To him that hath shall be given; and so it came about that the Protectorate's administration, following with the executive engineers, also pitched their tents and built their initial bungalows around the same centre.

One only has to walk west for a quarter of and hour along the Salisbury Road past the railway crossing into the Upper Kabete highway to meet a gentle elevation that, in spite of ups and downs, never drops again to the same level as Nairobi until, a couple of hundred miles or so further on, it starts, after Lumbwa, its descent in earnest to the Great Lake. And today, where the first

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survey parties of the railway that has revolutionised this part of the globe found lion, rhino elephant, leopard, ostriches and countless herds of game in possession; where swamp and forest, plain and hill lay cheek by jowl in primeval restfulness, but little disturbed by the tentative scratchings and labours of the scattered Kikuyu, stands the vigorous and by no means unattractive capital of Kenya Colony.

Inevitably important commercial interests have gathered there. Many of the greatest manufacturing firms of the world are represented. Large business enterprises covering every class of industry are in existence. And remarkably beautiful suburbs have sprung up in the immediate neighbourhood.

As one debouches into the aforesaid Upper Kabete Road one becomes aware of the deep cocoa-coloured quality of the soil in the cuttings at either side, and this, to the observant newcomer, who has just perhaps arrived by train, may be his first introduction to the famous coffee soil of the Kenyan Highlands. For though the town really happened without any reference (to the agricultural possibilities of its contiguous countryside, like Ballarat of the great Australian gold rush, when the fever of its first cause of existence had subsided, it woke up to find the neighbourhood in which it is placed richly endowed with superior farming country.

In almost any other country in the world the great plains that surround Nairobi on its eastern and southern sides would be treated as a natural endowment of the highest economic value. And immediate steps would have been taken to cut them up into ranching, grain-growing and dairying farms, so that the wealth that lies idle in them might be tapped and the wilderness made to blossom like the rose. But the earlier pioneers of Kenya were not particularly well-versed in matters of rapid, scientific or systematic rural development; and when they found the hilly, rising, forest lands to the north and west composed of a soil so rich that almost every agricultural product, flower and fruit known to man could be raised from it, they took the line of greater attraction and less resistance and plumped for the beautiful cocoa-coloured country. To this day the plains lie almost undeveloped and uninhabited;- but in the future, with an industrious practical type of settler, such as Queensland favours and produces, if the handicaps of purchase price be not made prohibitive, they are likely to contribute most materially to the wealth of Nairobi and Kenya.

However, it was but natural in the first days of occupation, when land was plentiful and settlers scarce, that the rich, undulating well-watered areas of Kyambu, Kabete, N'gong and Limoru should have mesmerised the white population. And when the discovery was made that this class of soil grew coffee to a perfection that ensured a special price on the London market, men were hardly to be blamed for concentrating their attention upon it; relegating to a later generation the task of taming the Athi Plains and establishing an export trade in those more vulgar articles of commerce, dairy produce and wheat.

Coffee Dominant.

As the success of coffee became more assured, and the regular appearance of its samples in London a recognised feature of the trade, realising remunerative returns, it soon became apparent that Kenya had at last found an economic foundation on which to build prosperity. The coffee-growing area rapidly extended to Ruiru and Thika. Then with a jump it sprang up-country and appeared, tentatively at first, in a dozen different places.

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But that is beyond the scope of the present subject and will be dealt with in due course later. To the country around Nairobi, and Kyambu especially, therefore belongs the honour of first developing a staple product for Kenya. Kyambu still holds pride of place in East Africa as pre-eminently the leading coffee district; and its proximity to the capital, its natural beauty, fertility and high state of development all combine to render it the most prized, and incidentally the dearest, spot, to settle in throughout the colony. Though the choicest parts of the other places named run close, if they do not even surpass it, in some important respects.

The coffee country around Nairobi is so noted for its speciality that the latter overshadows its other products. But it is nevertheless true that for potatoes, maize, beans and even flax and wheat, the soil has been amply proved, while vegetables of every kind, from lettuces and cauliflower to egg-fruit, tomatoes and asparagus grow to size and perfection, with a minimum of trouble, that would delight the heart of any old-country market gardener.

In addition citrus, pineapples, strawberries, bananas and many other fruits flourish exceedingly; and the flower gardens of the beautiful homes that dot these accessible country-sides, are, during and after the rainy seasons (there are two each year) a profusion of all the choicest vegetation that the European from northern latitudes holds most dear. They include roses, lilies, chrysanthemums, cannas, carnations, marguerites, violets, phlox, sweet-williams, mignonette, stocks, geraniums, ferns, palms, and a hundred more of the world's choicest blooms and foliage.

Nairobi is also blessed with an enviable variety of beautiful landmarks and surroundings; some of the former being too far to visit. They include the two greatest isolated mountains in the world, Kilimanjaro, roughly 120 miles to the south, and Kenya, 95 miles to the north-east; the two snow-clad peaks whose discovery when reported in England created a storm of incredulity.

Livingstone himself joined in the public outburst which temporarily overwhelmed the astonished explorers, maintaining that it was unnatural and absurd to claim that snow could be found or seen anywhere near the equator.

There are also continuous ranges and solitary hills, which in any other country would be regarded as vast mountains, to complete the panorama of Kenya's chief town. Beginning south, there stand the mighty N'gongs; ten to twelve thousand feet high; running west and north are Limoru and Upper Kyambu, reaching over 7,000 ft. Donyo Sabuk, a remarkable mound, 15,000 acres in extent, now preserved as a sanctuary for buffalo and other game by Sir Northrup MacMillan, rises to 10,000 feet on the north-east. East and South Machakos and Mua Hills, comprising interesting country of entirely different geological formation to the other highlands, lift themselves to 7,000 ft.

Though Nairobi possesses the largest accumulation of population in Kenya there remains, thanks to the system of reserves, ample game of all kinds within a few miles from its boundaries. In old closely settled districts only a few buck may be found; but across the vast Athi Plains still browse herds of every variety indigenous to this part of the colony; diligently chaperoned by lion who, of course, help themselves to zebra, eland or congoni whenever the spirit moves them or the Uganda Railway hooter makes them think the dinner-bell has gone. And they sometimes combine into parties of three or four to pull down a giraffe; an animal of

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the most harmless and gentle description; yet, owing to its size and the strength of its mighty legs, able to put up a formidable battle with, and even defeat, the attacks of single carnivora.

The Government.

Now that retrenchment is the order of the day, the sole Government institution left in the environments of Nairobi, of direct interest to the newcomer intending to settle in Kenya, is the Veterinary Laboratory at Kabete, about 8 miles west of the town. Nearer at hand are the prison and the lunatic asylum, but these, it is to be hoped, will never loom largely in the careers of readers. At the Laboratory some intensely interesting work in the direction of combatting stock diseases, making vaccines and serums, and experimental research generally, is carried on.

Other public departments of economic importance or general interest are housed modestly in different parts of Nairobi itself. They include the Agricultural, Land, Public Analyst, Treasury, General Post Office, Veterinary and Native Registration Departments.

The last-named of these has earned a deservedly high reputation amongst settlers for its excellent system of handling the thorny problem whose name it bears. And a great improvement in regularity and reliability of labour, as well as an important check on the movements of native criminals, have resulted from its system of numbering and finger-print identification. The town also possesses an excellent Natural History Museum, built up by a flourishing Society that has been very fortunate in securing ample local support and zealous officials.

The Natives.

Three of the best-known East African tribes live in close proximity to Nairobi, their reserves spreading however for many miles in the opposite direction. These are the Wakamba to the east, the Wakikuyu to the north, and the Masai to the south. The two former are populous agricultural tribes of considerable importance to the economic development of the colony. The latter is a pastoral race that lives barbarously by and on its cattle; drinking their blood mixed with milk as its favourite food and disdaining manual work of all kinds.

The Kikuyu provide probably the most numerous and best-liked workers for coffee estates, general farming and domestic house-hold duties; though Nairobi collects samples of all the different races belonging to East Africa, some of which are much preferred to the local natives by a considerable proportion of the white inhabitants. As a workman the Kavirondo, from the rich plains bordering the Victoria Nyanza, runs the Kikuyu close and indeed undoubtedly excels him in all classes of heavy manual labour, such as navvying. He is a bigger type of man than the Kikuyu; his well-known preference for a meat diet possibly accounting for this. His intelligence may not be usually so highly developed; but his honesty and cheerfulness are often superior to those of the latter.

This necessary but hurried description of Kenya's capital and chief centre with mention of its environments accomplished, the more appropriate and attractive business of visiting the various districts round about may be proceeded with.

(b) Kilima Kiu.

Sixty miles Mombasa-wards from Nairobi is Kilima Kiu. This name belongs to that series of hills lying some six or eight miles to the north of Ulu station, and forming the

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most easterly end to a chain of miniature highlands, of which the Mua Hills occupy the most considerable area. Though separated by a fairly wide stretch of plain and lower country from the great highland areas west of Nairobi these elevations possess considerable interests; and, being tributary economically to Nairobi, the inland highlands proper may be said to begin with them.

A remarkably clear green sky was showing to the west beneath a blanket of dull cloud that kept the day coldish as I made my way, on the mount thoughtfully sent to the station for my transportation, towards the distant rising ground. With many others probably, I had held the opinion that this country beyond the Athi and Kapiti plains must of necessity be low-lying, arid and hot. The thoughts of nearly all who reach Kenya's capital are turned instinctively upwards and Lakewards in the direction of the main highlands; and few give any consideration to those long stretches of territory which they have hardly had time to glance at when they were hurried through them, inland to the chief centre of the Colony.

A Steady Rise.

It came, therefore, as a pleasant surprise to find that the train had been steadily rising and not descending after passing Athi River station at about 4,800 ft., until at Ulu a height of 5,261 feet was registered. My road being a steady, though at times almost imperceptible, ascent, took me through an undulating savannah, clothed with sweet herbage and scattered thorn trees, which had the appearance of sound, healthy stock and wheat-growing country. Being waterless, however, it has been left untenanted for the nonce; though, a little to the west, the railway had passed one or two ex-soldier farms in precarious occupation by stalwarts whom the lack of water had been able to daunt. Professor Gregory, the eminent geologist, went through this territory three years ago and condemned it as unlikely to produce subterranean or artesian water, and the dictum of such an authority has doubtless assisted in discouraging occupation in the district. Nevertheless, a very happy and promising occurrence took place during my short visit; for water in some quantity was reached by a plant operated, and on a site divined, by Mr. Stirling of Nairobi, at 90ft. This happened on Major Walker's farm. One feels sure that Professor Gregory would be the first to rejoice at this fulfilment of his own gloomy prediction. A few months previously Mr. Finch struck a heavy supply a few miles further on; but this happened within a belt that the Professor had indicated as likely to produce satisfactory results from boring.

The Homestead.

Eight miles out at an elevation of 5,800 ft., on the summit of a broad swelling hill that overlooks an immense extent of country, my journey simultaneously ended with sunset and my arrival at Mr. F. O. B. Wilson's homestead. Though the house is a new, commodious and comfortable one, built of neat, strong and very superior-looking red bricks made from the sandy loam soil of the neighbourhood, and marvellously enough with untrained native labour from the adjacent Wakamba reserve, I knew sufficient of the history of the estate to be aware that the agreeable surroundings amongst which I suddenly found myself had only been achieved by several years of struggle and endeavour through the various, customary pioneering stages of tent, grass huts, sun and mud hut.

When in 1910 Mr. Wilson acquired this broad estate, with its splendid reach of changing soils and climatic conditions resulting from a

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of at least 1,000 feet between that boundary on the plains to the summit of the hills behind, where for a considerable portion of the year heavy wet mists settle nightly, he entered virgin country and took on a task that must have daunted any man lacking in the true grit of the pioneer. It is on record that as many as thirteen lion were counted as having formed a party promenading musically round his frail dwelling place during one disquieting night in those days. Though without agricultural training he had behind him that self-reliance, initiative and resource which Navy training brings to most who have lived it; and doubtless these developed qualities went far, when things worked out awry or mistakes or disappointments crowded one on another—as they will with the best of men at the beginning of an unaccustomed, difficult task—to keep him doggedly to his purpose. The result is there to-day for all to read on the face and up and down the length and breadth of this great estate. Yet the past ten or twelve years have been no quiet, brooding time of peaceful steady development; especially for a man trained to war from his boyhood up. In 1912, Mr. Wilson found a partner whose able and constant energies have supplemented his own. Mr. Joyce, retired from the artillery of the British Army with just about as much knowledge in farming matters as his partner, nevertheless put his back into the work from the start. Errors of judgment were inevitable, especially in the early days of the colony when no man knew what was likely to bring in a revenue and all settlement work in those primitive equatorial highlands, even for the wisest colonial veteran, was still in its experimental stage.

Ostriches.

Ostriches were selected originally as the main industry of this property. By the time the fateful year of 1914 was half over a number of good birds had been assembled. Then came the War and these men, leaving everything they possessed in the care of a feeble-bodied, but nevertheless stout-hearted, loyal Goan employee—he actually shot two lion during one night in protection of his masters' interests—made for the nearest depot of the E.A.M.R.

When the campaign finished and they could return to their pioneering pursuits once more, they found the Goan still in charge. But the ostriches had disappeared and they or their descendants are doubtless amongst the beautiful specimens of these birds that to-day ornament the landscape for the passing railway passenger; and figure in the posters advertising Nature's Zoo.

Dairying.

Then it was decided to take up dairying; and with characteristic promptitude these financially disabled settlers turned their attention to subduing their particular piece of wilderness for the second time and starting life again in 1918.

Their job of work included the following items:—Lion, zebra and other game had to be driven off the property, crossbred or native cattle and purebred bulls gradually acquired and kept alive by regular dipping, ploughs set going, systematic sub-division inaugurated, broad useful boundaries and fire-breaks of sisal planted, springs opened up, wells dug, fencing on an extensive scale started, dams built, houses built, homes established and family life commenced.

And to-day one sees the nearly finished result of those years of ceaseless, accurately directed endeavour in a highly efficient, well-conducted revenue-producing estate; and in permanent homes, in which healthy young Kenyans are growing up.

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Nairobi, though somewhat far away, became the object of economic attack. To obtain a fair if not leading share of the milk supply there every attention has been given, firstly, to securing a dairy herd that will produce a maximum quantity of high quality milk for a minimum consumption of grass and, secondly, to putting an honest, scientifically pure, wholesome, dependable product on the market. Mombasa, too, was tackled, and immediate markets secured at the Colony's only port; where good clean rich milk came as manna in the wilderness and a novelty hardly to be expected under their tropical conditions.

But the changes in the railway have killed that trade; yet to-day a few customers still remain there who prefer Kilima Kiu milk, though it can arrive only four times a week, to any they can procure elsewhere; and they insist on getting it. Is it impossible for some system of daily trolley or light tram service to be inaugurated that would prevent such injury being thoughtlessly done to budding primary enterprise, maintaining thereby constant connection for both passengers and perishable goods with the sea-coast?

The Plant.

In the spacious dairy, built of cool brick with stone-flagged floors, I was privileged to see at work the fine pasteurising plant which, as far as I know, is without rival in Kenya. Before inspecting this I was out to the early milking in the bomas scattered throughout the estate in which the herds are most carefully and thoroughly milked. The Wakamba milkers are provided with clean hot water in which to wash their hands, as well as the cows' udders and flanks before beginning on each separate animal. The first straining of the lactic fluid takes place in this boma; the second occurring at time of pasteurising. So that the chances of discovery in Kilima Kiu milk of dead mice, frogs, hairs, bits of dirt or other foreign matter by the consumer are exceedingly remote.

The steam-driven pasteurising plant first heats the milk to 156deg. F.; after which it is retained in a tank for twenty minutes to allow the effect of this germ-killing process to be entirely thorough. Then the milk descends in a white cascade down the cooling apparatus, kept below freezing by a refrigerator plant, and in the space of one minute is run into the despatching cans—an insulated vacuum type being reserved for hot weather—at a temperature of 40deg. Hence, in covered carts, it is carried to the station; the Nairobi supply going up at eventide; while Mombasa's, and that of many other districts drawing their requirements from this great dairy farm, travel by the most suitable trains given in the timetables of the Uganda Railway.

Pasteurising.

It is desirable perhaps for the information of the uninitiated to enlarge a little on the subject of pasteurisation. To those who are apt to mix, in their hazy knowledge of the subject, this method of purification with sterilisation, it may be explained that the latter term invariably means the crude boiling of milk, which has the unfortunate effect of rendering this otherwise naturally nutritious and digestible fluid, indigestible, unpalatable and innutritious. At the best it may be said that boiling kills germs; and this can be the sole excuse of those local doctors who so frequently recommend this treatment. But it does this at the expense of milk's most valuable ingredients, rendering it an unsuitable or certainly an inferior diet for invalids and infants.

Pasteurising, after exhaustive tests and experiments, has been

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proved to effect the result aimed at—bacillus destruction, without injuring in any particular the delicate qualities of milk as it comes from the cow. This is now recognized so widely that nearly all milk supplied to large towns in England and the U.S.A. is pasteurised, and some of the finest butter in the world is also made from milk, separated immediately subsequent to treatment by the process that has revolutionised the dairying industry and is named after the great French scientist who discovered it.

A Lesson for Nairobi.

One could not help noticing while in the dairy that a large proportion of the milk was labelled for those who know and demand a first-class article, such as the Hospitals, the Nairobi Dairy, and Messrs. Jacobs Ltd. Many private consumers in Nairobi, however, their judgment or energies perhaps vitiated by a long course of dependence on native servants, appear to be extremely indifferent as to the quality of the food they obtain and especially of their milk. Any whitish liquid seems to satisfy them. Yet the frequent outbreaks of enteric, paratyphoid, and other complaints in town mainly arising through stomach infection, should be a perpetual warning to them. It is certain that if they could themselves see the difference in methods employed by this scientifically and efficiently conducted dairy and those of the suave, dignified but unsanitary Somalis, (Government or Municipal pets who have been encouraged to settle round Nairobi for milk supplying purposes, and endowed with the free use of public lands), no individual in our chief centre would risk his health and life by procuring his allowance of this necessity of life from a doubtful, let alone a probably tainted source.

The Breeds.

A good look round the milking homas, for there are a number in which the cows are wisely kept separate in manageable herds under the special care of independent groups of trusted Wakamba boys, reveals a surprisingly fine stamp of beast in as good condition as one wishes to see dairy cattle. Much Shorthorn blood was originally introduced, either by purchases from the leading herds of the colony or by bulls run with native cows. To-day, mature opinion favours the Ayrshire as the best type for this country-side; and already the slimmer limbs, smaller frames and distinctive points of that famous and robust breed are clearly apparent mingling with, or superimposed upon, the larger calibred, sturdier stock their advent is slowly displacing. Already 800-gallon cows are numerous; and the process of culling and grading up proceeds continuously. A bold policy of herd control has been inaugurated that includes, now the stock are fairly well protected by sisal boundaries and wire-fenced sub-divisions, the free running of cattle at night. This plucky experiment, that brings the methods of the estate materially nearer to those of an Australian dairy farm, has resulted in a marked improvement in the health, especially of grades and pure-breds. It has also noticeably increased the morning milk yield—European stock love night feeding and a restful day, which the boma system prohibits—without producing any serious losses. For the five per cent. that annually pay toll with their lives to the appetites of visiting lion make a distinctly smaller total, besides being better eating for the carnivora, than the usual percentage of disease casualties directly due to stuffy, unhealthy confinement in homas. This system likewise makes less work for the attendants; and is infinitely cleaner for man and beast in the milking boma.

Bull v. Lion.

One must not imagine that lion have it all their own way with

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these fine old British breeds. A curious instance to the contrary happened in connection with a pedigree Ayrshire bull belonging to the farm that broke loose one evening from his stall and disappeared into the night. Next morning he strolled cheerily back to breakfast from the lower end of the estate, gashed and torn with lion's talons. But he did get back and survived; and a closer examination shewed both blood and lion's hair adhering to his powerful horns. What mighty struggle the stout-hearted Ayrshire put up, and what absorbingly interesting drama full of tense moments and stirring incidents that night concealed, none may ever know. But it must have been worth seeing; and indicates that the patronymic John Bull is not unworthy of honour even to a country that has a lion for its typical heraldic figure.

The Farm.

A general tour of the estate which covers 20,000 acres only increases one's first impression of its variety and potentialities. In the morning a visit was paid to Cultivation Kopje, a curiously shaped granite cone, that interested Professor Gregory when here and forms the most noticeable feature of the estate from the railway.

Data goes to prove that the farm averages 5 degrees cooler than Nairobi. A good area of wheat for grain and 25 acres of ensilage maize are the main crops grown this year on the rich, loamy, dark-red cultivation belt which nearly encircles the hill.

One self-sown patch of the former showed rust, but not badly. The other two varieties, Equator and N.E.T. from Mr. Sewall of Njoro, were quite free from this trouble, but needing rain; especially the former which is a late wheat sown late. In the afternoon I was taken to the topmost hills approaching 7,000 feet altitude whence a view was obtained that seemed to include half Kenya and all the northern elevations of Tanganyika. On the reverse side to the homestead one looked into the Wakamba reserve where bad management and overstocking have reduced the pastures to an appallingly bare condition for a time of the year that still has all the driest months ahead. On these beautiful hills of the estate a different vegetation and much greener grass are to be found. So that when the drier areas lower down are exhausted the stock are gradually shifted up with the approach of hot weather to the level of constant night rain and cool, rain-bringing breezes.

In a dozen suitable spots large dams, two at least of which may be termed colossal, are either building or completed. Wells have been sunk to small supplies of permanent water in several places; and a few natural springs assist in supplying the farm's requirements, which run into nearly 5,000 gallons per day. A steady effort is also being made to plant up five to ten acres of eucalyptus every year, so that there shall never be a scarcity of either building poles or firewood on the estate. An excellent market garden and experimental orchard has been planted. Flower beds are being laid out. A small stud of horses is kept and a filly was being broken in the day I completed my visit and regretfully made my way back to the Station.

Very cautiously now that the country is cleared of ticks and heavily grazed in parts, the keeping of a small flock of sheep is being considered. In the early days a rather rashly conceived endeavour to stock up with those creatures led to a loss of 800; but conditions have altered now; and a few Karakuls, with lambs like animated astrakan collars at foot, appear to be flourishing.

Everything considered, Kliewa Kin can show an amount of steady progress and well directed endeavour that has achieved a success

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which the owners are entitled to regard with pride. And even if, in later years, competition should interfere seriously with their present milk trade, they will be in one of the best positions in the Colony to turn to the export business.

(c) An English Orchard Set in Equatorial Africa.

On the very highest point of the Mua Hills, that lie east of Nairobi at a distance of about 35 miles and 7,000 ft. altitude is situated the farm of Mr. and Mrs. Langridge, whose deciduous orchards far exceed in area anything else of the kind in Kenya Colony. The homestead is a great roomy house, mostly made with their own hands entirely out of materials produced by the estate. It possesses a mellow beauty and radiates a suggestion of comfort from its deep verandahs, steep thatched eaves and gable windows that one connects with some old Elizabethan mansion.

And well the interior fulfils the external promise when, of a frosty evening—for it is cold up there in July—the guests, who weekly throng the hospitable place, snuggle round the great ingle nook; enjoying the nightly cheeriness of congenial company and the welcome warmth of incense breathing olive wood as much as if they were at home during November in their hosts' own Norfolk, with the keen East wind from across the North Sea shaking at the shutters.

Over the Plains.

If one does not motor out direct from Nairobi, Athi River is the station at which to descend for Mua Hills. Thence one passes 20 miles over the great rolling plain dotted with game and, after the rains, spread with a sea of grass like a wheatfield ripening for harvest; a similitude that some day will give place, doubtless, to reality.

During the last five miles a steady rise heavenwards must be negotiated; for 2,000 feet have to be climbed from Athi, and the type of country as well as its climate rapidly changes. Rich green meadow grass, interpersed with park-like clumps of olive and other timber, takes the place of treeless plain. A cooler, fresher breeze as one ascends makes one consider the problem of warmer clothing in spite of the bright sunshine; glimpses of loamy red soil, where some burrowing animal has been at work, full of grit from the solid granite underlay—for this is not a volcanic country at all—and then one is bowling through a long avenue of wattle trees; whose blossom, if you happen to go at the right time, fills the air with sweetest fragrance, coupled, for those who know Australia, with many a glorious memory of unforgettable spring days, pic-nics and joyous bush rides in the Antipodes.

From the crest of the hill is the grand panorama of hundreds of square miles of virgin country with Kilimanjaro on the horizon; Nairobi like a white reef in the comparatively near distance; and a railway train creeping across the plain like a caterpillar some twenty miles away.

Its Own Climate.

The climate on the Mua Hills, in keeping with its deep loose soil, is peculiar to itself. Cool and fresh, with ample rainfall and an almost nightly Yorkshire mist that soaks and renovates the most delicate foliage, it is an ideal fruit country. Only a few years ago the site of Mua Park orchards was as much a wilderness as the greater area of these hills still remains to-day. But it was a very beautiful wilderness; almost a sanctuary, for the greater carnivora do not appear to wander so high, preferring the warmer drier plains. Wild thyme banks, such as Will Shakespeare knew; scented herbs and bushes of many descriptions; lovely wild flowers and a great diversity of animal and bird life, were indigenous there. And only the tending, creative hand

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the civilising whiteman was required to exchange order and productiveness for its futile, stagnant, age-long uselessness.

This the Langridges have marvellously accomplished with a loving eye for the natural beauties of their chosen home; and that fondness for the wild life of harmless fauna and flora which bespeaks the true nature lover. On to their portion of East African mountainous scenery they have harmoniously grafted the most treasured glories of intensive modern cultivation, together with tasteful vistas of landscape gardening; at the same time acclimatising many of the earth's choicest fruits, trees and flowers.

At every season of the year, it is safe to say, the visitor will be met with a blaze of colour from the acre of picturesque garden in which a bewildering medley of Old Country and exotic plants are to be found. Here one encounters such old friends as poplar, elm, hawthorn, laburnum and weeping-willow trees. Shrubs of Plantagenista, bay, scented geranium and lavender perfume the air. And the collection of roses must be one of the finest in Africa.

An English Orchard.

But it is in the orchard that the greatest interest centres, for there one continually comes across positive facts that entirely upset all the preconceived ideas of newcomers as to what is possible in an equatorial country.

When I first saw Mua Park, some three or four years ago, there were 70 acres of well-planted young, but mostly bearing fruit trees, consisting of the most sought-after varieties of Northern European apples, pears and plums; with a few limes, guavas, Paramatta and navel oranges and pineapples thrown in, just to shew that the country is nominally sub-tropical. To-day more than twice that area is under fruit; and year by year the acreage is extended, for the farm is a large one. And these valuable trees are now only well and carefully planted out, but they are also simultaneously protected by elaborate breakwind belts of cupressus, eucalyptus, Mauritius thorn, etc., so that a perpetual calm reigns within the orchard even when the prevalent north-eastern winds are blowing strongly against the exposed hill-tops. The dual purpose eucalypts are particularly a success. In a few years they have reached a height of 40 or 50 feet; and now provide building poles and frame-work for the many different classes of store, stock and dwelling-houses needed on a farm of this size and nature.

The average price of one shilling per lb. that the fruit from the estate commands is an attractive remuneration for the owners' many years pioneering; and the supply has so far been quite inadequate to the demand. Mr. Langridge does not, however, expect to dominate the rather restricted local market for ever; and his plans already are aiming at a wider and more reliable field. He is not enamoured of prohibitive prices for his produce, even though temporarily favourable to himself; but prefers to see a larger demand at a price that would put his apples, plums and pears regularly on every European table, whether rich or poor, in the Colony.

The Fruit.

At the present time he is planting plums as rapidly as he can turn out the young trees; and all his budding is done on his own stocks. By Wakamba natives he has trained to the work. This fruit appeals to him for two reasons. It bears extremely heavily; he already has trees at four, five and six years of age that produce several hundred-weight of marketable fruit annually. And there is a constant demand for them either fresh, dried as prunes, or made into jam. The last process but one is now receiving attention on the estate and an attractive article, that

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keep indefinitely, is being increasingly supplied to local consumers. First-rate jam is also being made.

The fruiting seasons on Mua Hills are as follows—and a careful perusal of them will show how much more prolonged and varied they are than those of fruit-growing countries, such as Australia, Canada and South-Africa, situated a long distance from the equator:—

Apricots, November-December. Very early apples, November-December. Plums, November-March. Grapes, March. Figs, March and April. Peaches, March and April. Pears, February and June (two seasons). Pineapples, February-April and June-August (two seasons). Main crop apples, June to March, and May to July (different kinds different seasons). Oranges, August to October. Limes and lemons all the year round.

Beginnings.

It must not be supposed that this wonderful pioneer enterprise grew up by accident or has not required shrewd judgment and continuous endeavour on the part of its principal. Mr. Langridge began his labours in Kenya with the initial advantage of being a trained and practical agriculturist probably born and bred to the work. He was, indeed, on his way to British Columbia via South Africa, having participated in the Boer War and remained some years as a resident in the sub-continent; when he heard at Mombasa of the lion-shooting to be had in the Highlands. He left his ship for sporting reasons, with no idea of settling in the colony, fully intending to continue by a subsequent boat—and he is still here. He definitely states that he is never going any further afield and that he has put down his stakes on the Mua Hills for good and all.

Yet it was some years before he finally chose his orchard site. With cautious deliberation he watched conditions carefully before deciding; living a sportsman's life and experimenting with ostrich farming in the meantime. For it is to be imagined that he, like other people, had a load of prejudice against equatorial conditions to shake off before he got down to facts. Now he has made good after years of effort and expense; and those for whom this fine pioneer has broken the road will have a comparatively easy time to follow in his footsteps.

An American Testimony.

All sorts of strange folk, who have heard of Mua Park, drift across that twenty miles of Athi Plain and ascend the great hills to see for themselves the miracle of an English orchard under the equator. No greater or more sincere testimony to his success has been paid to Mr. Langridge than that given by a quiet, longheaded American who turned up one day and claimed the privilege of the open-handed hospitality for which the estate is famous. He explained that he was from California and was just hobeing through Africa, looking for a place to settle himself, his wife and eleven children. After wandering alertly through the orchards for some hours he sought out Mr. Langridge, and asked for a business chat. When they had achieved privacy, he addressed his host as follows: — "Lookee hyar, siree. I've jest been sizing up this proposition of yours and I guess Burbank has been wasting his time down in California. I've never seen growth and promise to equal your exhibits in any other park of the world and I've decided to come in. Hyar's my wud; so shake, pardner, and then give me a nigger and yer mule shay and I'll jest lilo off right now to Athi and wire the wife to come along with the family."

Unfortunately the owner wasn't looking for a partner. (He has the best of partners in his active helpmeet, Mrs. Langridge). But he nevertheless regards the offer as the

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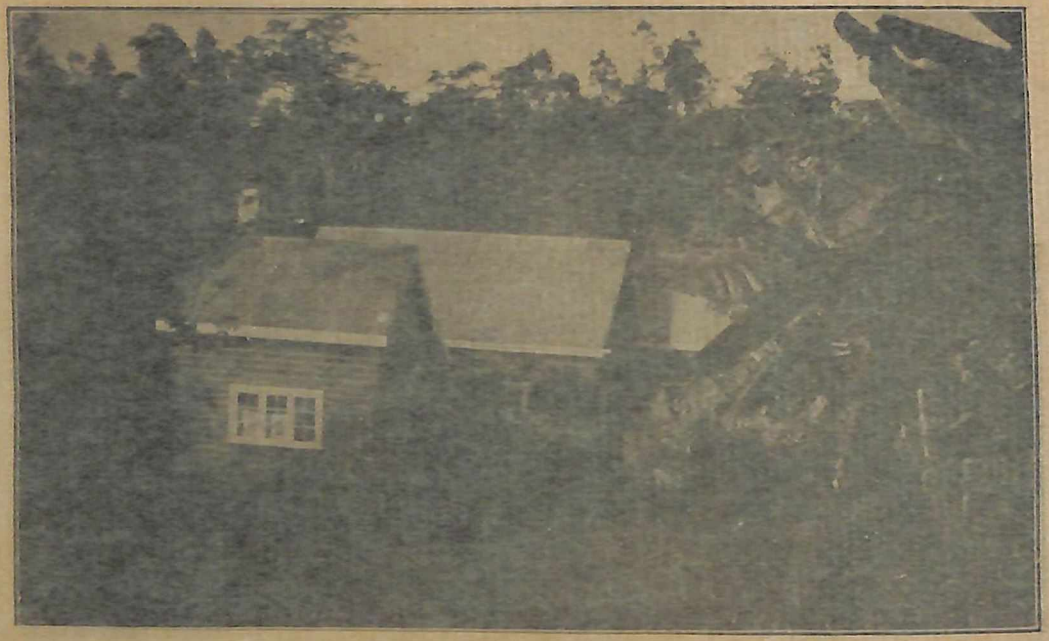

A homestead deep in the woods.

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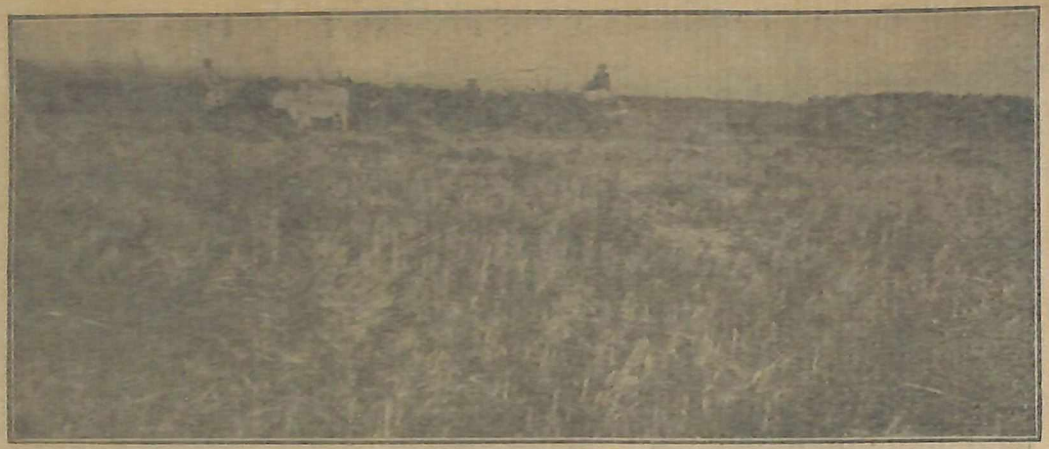

Cutting wheat with oxen and binder.

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A nice show of Kenyan horses.

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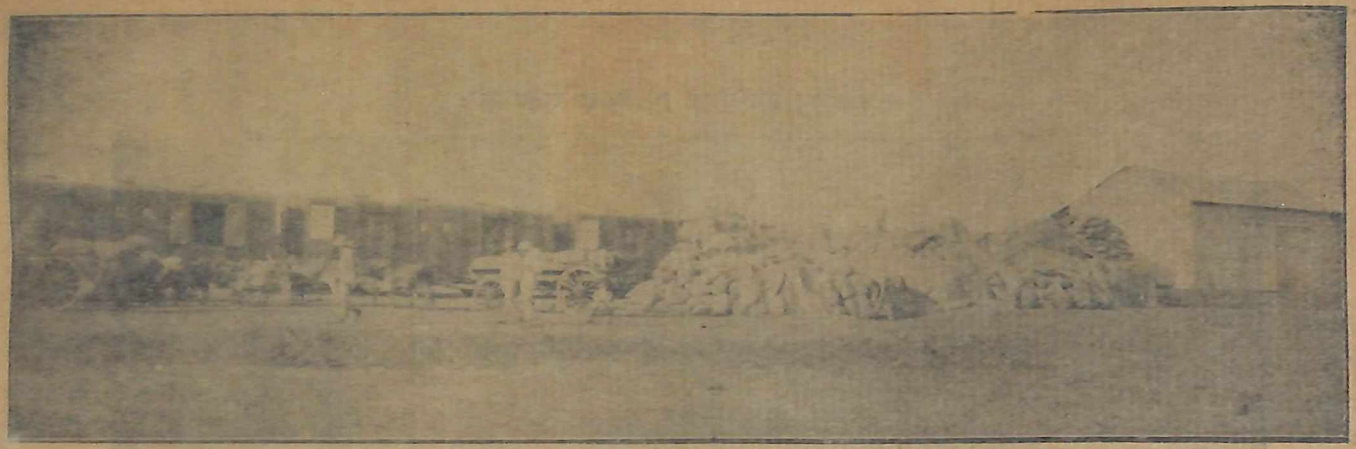

Loading 7,000 bags of maize at a county station.

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finest compliment on his work in Mua Hills that he has ever had paid him.

One more illuminating insight into Mr. Langridge's success is his attitude towards his trees. It is not too much to say that he loves them and believes they respond—and that all organic things that human beings are intent on protecting and developing respond—to the power of the heart; to the kindly, genial, brooding spirit combined with steady industry of the individual conveyed by that beautiful old English word—husbandman.

There is undoubtedly something in the idea that a psychological effect on life is caused by benevolent, mentally-constructive attention. It has been noticed and even turned, I believe, into a rural motto in Ireland, that a watched pig is always fat. To paraphrase a beautiful quotation:—

"He farmeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small,
For the good God who watches us
He made and loveth all."

(d) The Romance of a Successful Kyambu Coffee Estate.

There is no prettier drive round Nairobi—and it would be hard to find a more picturesque one anywhere—than through the charming Muthaiga suburb, out along the Limuru road. The red roofs of snug bungalows and spacious mansions peep out from amongst the deep green of mature forest trees which passed their sapling hood long before the white man was heard of in those parts. And many a lovely hedge clump of macrocarpa from the Rocky Mountains of North America, eucalypt from Australia, or Jacaranda from Brazilian highlands mingle with a profusion of other foliage to add grace to the indigenous veterans.

Thence one whisks down a valley road, overhung with natural forest growth cunningly reinforced by plantations of gum and other useful exotic trees; until the rising highway on the opposite side of the steep ravine debouches into the cleared, richly fertile and highly cultivated, rolling country of Kyambu proper.

But a few miles guidance through this delightful, diversified scenery and one suddenly pulls up under the pleasant, shady trees of an old-world garden, flecked with green lawns and the bright colours of poppies, marguerites, lilies, roses and many other flowering plants. Open-air retreats, overhung by brilliant bougainvilleas, invite repose with a good book during the sunny hours of the day. But immediately beyond this limited sanctuary appear on all sides unmistakable signs of strenuous and successful labour that have rendered Closeburn one of the most productive farms in Kenya, and for many years the leading food factory for Nairobi.

The Keynote.

Production, heavy production, has indeed always been the keynote of this estate ever since Mr. Grahame Bell, broken in health by over-much office work in a sedentary profession down South, and with only modest means, first camped out fourteen years ago in the scrub on the broad, whale-backed ridge that forms the main portion of the property. For this is not a proposition that has been juggernauted through to success by massed cash expenditure; but has rather been tactfully and skilfully piloted to fruition with a minimum outlay and on a self-supporting basis from the start. Mr. Bell can still recall the pleasure and encouragement that the sale of his first eighty florins' worth of produce gave him.

While perennial main crops, such as coffee and fruit, have always been the final objective for "Closeburn," the problem of immediate returns to cover cost of living expenses and meet the heavy labour bills was solved in this instance by vegetable growing and nursery work.

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One leaves this splendid property, with its multitudinous interests and departments and its high state of development, feeling that even if there be naturally richer or more easily worked farms—and "Closeburn" lies in a belt of country famous for many of the best plantations in Kyambu—no settler in the Colony has made better use of his time, energies and the resources at his disposal than Mr. Grahame Bell.

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CHAPTER II.

NAIVASHA.

The Greatest Cattle and Pure-Bred Stock Centre of the Colony.

Seated on the broad verandah of the Rift Valley Hotel, a place of call well worthy of patronage by the Kenyan holiday-maker or visitor, and overlooking the spacious blue water lake as it shimmers in the morning sun, one gets a good idea of the geography of this extensive district, only about 60 miles from Nairobi by motor-car and some 80 miles by rail.

The iron road runs almost north and south just here, winding tortuously from Kijabe along escarpment, hill and lake until it eventually resumes its main direction westward. So it happens that instead of facing south, as one would imagine of a hotel standing parallel with an east-west railway, the verandah looks into the eye of the setting sun.

Across the lake to the hills 15 or 16 miles away is therefore west; and one at first fails to realise that the distance is more than two-thirds the width of the English Channel between Calais and Dover.

The Landscape.

The richest land on the farms bordering the lake is to be found on the foreshore; marked and bounded by a belt of dark green thorn trees that, with a few short gaps, encircle the entire circumference of this 150 square miles of sweet water. At the back of the lake, 30 miles or more away, extends all along the horizon the continuation of that vast elevated barrier known as the Mau and comprising one bank of this geologically intensely interesting and mighty Rift Valley. Professor Gregory, who has made its study a speciality, traces its length almost from Cape Town across Africa to the Red Sea, which forms part of it, through the Jordan Valley northwards; and explains the gigantic cicatrice's width as being rather the result of a subsidence in the earth's crust than a split or crack. Between the lake and these far away hills lie the Ndabibi Plains, a territory that, in common with much land lying in the Rift Valley hereabouts, is noted for the excellence of its pastoral qualities.

The Township.

Between the hotel, the only place of its kind in the district, yet which caters attractively for all the floating population passing to and fro, and the lake front, is the scattered and empty township. The spacious slope, with one or two formed roads intersecting it, is almost innocent of buildings until the railway station, near the water, breaks the monotony of bare grass in this skeleton city. The main buildings, apart from the hotel, are the administrative bomas, offices, and residences on the left; together with a few Indian shops and some distant erections of the Public Works Department to the right.

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Vegetables.

With three reliable, permanent streams, on or bordering the estate, market-gardening promised the surest road to prompt income-making. All the lower lying valley lands were therefore as quickly as possible turned into irrigated, intensely cultivated areas. As an example of the resulting production it is interesting to learn that a million pounds' weight of vegetables were supplied to the military during the war by this farm. And while this department, with its neat, commodious, and systematic packing sheds in which the "private custom" trade is catered for, has now sunk to relative insignificance, 85,000 lbs. of vegetables, 4,000 bunches of bananas, 1,000 pineapples and 10,000 lbs. of other fruits have been sent out during the past twelve months.

Simultaneously with market-gardening, citrus and general fruit nurseries were begun and there are few orchards or gardens in Kenya that are not the richer for budded trees turned out from "Closeburn." The detail and laboriousness that rendered successful the market-gardening has also infected the nursery work, for the most conscientious precautions are taken to place on the market reliable fool-proof goods. No treelings are sold until they have been lifted twice and the roots carefully pruned, thereby ensuring a maximum chance of life when transplanted, even after a long journey to less favourable surroundings.

The Fruit.

To-day, extensive rows and plantations of mature, bearing citrus trees are to be found in all directions through or flanking the coffee. They include Washington Navels, Mandarins, Tangerines, Valencias, Mediterranean Sweet and Jaffas; grape-fruit, citrons and every class of lemon or lime. Many have been budded on Zanzibar seedling stocks, while others are on rough lemons and shew a correspondingly vigorous growth.

The banana groves of "Closeburn" are alone worthy of a visit. They are so extensive that one is irresistibly reminded of Uganda; and every variety one can think of, from Chinese dwarf to the choicest sorts of the West Indies, are represented. There are ten thousand plants mostly smooth Cayenne, in the pineapple acreage. Maize and potato growing, pigs, dairying and ornamental shrub and flower production are also carried on continuously on a modest scale. Mr. Bell employs two white assistants and many hundreds of natives.

Coffee.

To-day all these different branches of agriculture are side-issues, though important and remunerative. They have served their chief purpose in supplying the sinews of war for, and grub-staking, the big enterprise to the stage of making it predominantly a mature coffee estate that can rely for its main source of revenue upon the steady output of fragrant bean.

Two hundred acres are under this crop; the first bushes being eleven years old and the remainder eight, six and less years old down to the present day; planting usually taking place annually, for the farm has in all 640 acres of land. A very satisfactory crop was ripening on the well-pruned, beautifully cultivated rows of bushes at the time of my visit, and at a modest calculation 40 tons should be harvested this year. As the owner drove me about the estate, swarms of interested bibis, who have migrated from the adjoining Kikuyu reserve, for the picking season, chased the car or stood chattering and laughing along the tracks. Coffee is indeed a cheerful crop for much concentrated labour and traffic are connected with it and the consequent bustle and activity on a well-organised estate operate in the direction of brightness.

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The Factory.

The principal glory of "Closeburn," however, is, after all, its great coffee mill; representing a vast amount of steady, technical thought, engineering skill and heavy expenditure. Built of solid grey stone, this factory has been designed on a scale adequate to deal not merely with the produce of the estate, but also with that of neighbouring growers. Indeed, so good is the work done in this department, and so reasonable the prices charged, that consignments flow in for treatment from all over Kenya. "Closeburn" coffee, put up in 1 lb. tins, is well known on the local retail market and well deserves its excellent reputation, for no pains are spared in selecting and preparing the best berry for its manufacture. A beautiful waterfall supplies the necessary power and also grinds the maize meal for the plantation workers.

Solid and spacious as this mill is in its beautiful setting of wooded ravine, one must enter to realise all it means in skilful design, labour-saving efficiency and insatiable capacity. Deep-down in its bowels is the turbine basement and superimposed thereon are four storeys; in designing which the object mainly kept in view has been the utilisation of gravity for transferring from process to process the raw product. This is delivered and enters the factory on a level with the third storey from a road at the back.

Gordon coffee machinery is used throughout; a capacious Gordon Atlas Grader doing the preliminary work of sifting and selecting the carefully cleaned beans. But Mr. Bell, not being entirely satisfied that even finer grading might not be accomplished by machinery specially designed for his particular class of business, took advantage of Mr. John W. Gordon's recent visit to Kenya to consult the principal of this well-known firm on his ideas. For hours these two sat on the floor in front of the Atlas machine and struggled with the problem; eventually producing an ingeniously designed grader—now installed. This device sorts and shakes up; grades and selects; combines mixable residues and varieties for regrading once again; and finally turns out a series of qualities from A. to peaberry that have been carefully picked over to the last bean. Even then hand-picking is finally resorted to. The roasting done in this factory is extraordinarily even in colour; and the cleaning, winnowing and husking mechanical contrivances are so complete that the most intractable bean, if it possess any kernel of economic value at all, is turned into a marketable article.

All sorts of coffee are sent into this factory now-a-days and have to be worked up from the cherry tanks into the highly finished article, fetching eventually an average price in the region of one shilling per lb.

The Nurseries.

From the factory a nearby road invites an excursion toward the northern boundary of the estate bordering the great Kikuyu reserve, whence comes the labour supply. This route reveals fresh waterfalls and irrigable valleys in which three or four acres of coffee, and citrus nursery combined with vegetable garden are being worked. A large regular business in coffee seedlings has been done for years past from this estate, and planters requiring any special varieties such as Blue Mountain, may confidently rely on getting their needs supplied here. During a round trip of the farm, a patch of 14 acres of marrowfat peas was sighted; and 75 acres of every class of fruit from apples to Avocado pears inspected. A visit to the enormous quarry, worked entirely by natives, trained to stone-cutting on the spot, revealed the inexhaustible source of fine stone being used on the estate for its buildings.

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[illegible], comprising, in its natural state, a valuable extensive cedar forest, the rainfall increases to about 45 in., while the Kinangop above gets 60 to, in some places, 100 inches.

All this country, low or high, east or west, is free from the more deadly African stock diseases; and is fine stock country, with the exception of certain well-known limited areas south of the lake, that appear to suffer from some mineral deficiency in the soil. Merinoes do well in the hotter, drier areas and the bigger-framed, British breeds succeed best on the highest, wettest pastures. Cattle of all kinds flourish at every elevation and there is no part of East or Equatorial Africa where local stock can boast so high a percentage of imported blood. It is symptomatic of the present tendency towards dairying that many Friesiands are now to be found in the district and the interest in Ayrshires is also on the increase.

On the Kinangop itself the soil is included to be poor over large stretches, except where the Masai made their manyattas or bomas (night stockades) for generations. But it is all excellent grazing country, as the earlier presence of this great pastoral tribe testifies; for they are first-class judges of good stockland and forced their way up here several decades ago.

A thoroughfare to Nyeri of growing popularity goes up from Naivasha, crosses the broad Kinangop and mounts the vast range of the Aberdares along a wild, romantic forest highway, before it gradually drops to 6,000 ft. on the other side. At the top of the divide, where cedar gives place to bamboo and giant heather, one obtains far-reaching glimpses in all directions of the tops of thousands of acres of forest ravine and timbered valleys; forming an equatorial Montenegro or Alsatia in which a deliberate recluse or fugitive band might live concealed, perhaps for years, without outside interference. It is up here that the trout hatcheries were situated that have contributed so materially to the sport-giving features of the district.

Altitude.

No indication of discomfort due to elevation was shewn by any of the inhabitants I came across during my visit to this province and its plateau; nor did my sudden transference to 8,000 and 9,000 feet altitude incommode me in any way. Every person I met seemed in particularly robust health; while the physique, the dynamic energy and the rosy cheeks of the local children challenge comparison with those in the healthiest parts of rural England. One cannot help thinking—as the hereditary experience of the three-century-old European inhabitants in Central American highlands goes to confirm—that perhaps, after all, ingenious, thoughtful Nature has all along prepared these great, healthy, fertile, altitudes of the Equator for the occupation of civilised, vigorous migrants from the temperate zones; minimising the rarity of their atmosphere by means of the earth's centrifugal action. Surely the incessantly rapid spinning of the globe on its axis through the ages must, in accordance with one of the simplest laws of mechanics, have produced some definite increase in atmospheric circumference—some piling up of a thicker stratum of air—round the Equator?

(b) Crescent Isle the Most Unique Property in Kenya.

Some six miles from the station of Naivasha along a country road that is distinctly bumpy in places, Mr. Wills, the owner of Crescent Isle with myself as passenger, run his powerful Fiat off the main track on to his private estate, Willsdale, and headed for the lake.

Having placed the car under cover at the old homestead in

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which he lived prior to settling permanently on his island, he led me a few hundred yards to a shore-side spot where, at the end of a primitive pier, a small motor-driven boat waited to receive us. In a few minutes we were pushing our prow through the lake weed, including many beautiful blue water lilies; in and out of which numerous amphibious fowl were dipping and swimming contentedly, unalarmed either by the pouf-pouf of the serviceable little motor or human intrusion. For Mr. Wills is not an eager slaughterer of wild life, even on the mainland shore; while on the island he bans shooting altogether.

On the Lake.

As soon as the boat had emerged from the weed-encumbered coast line into open water, and the fouled propeller had been cleaned, we accelerated speed; passing rapidly over the short mile that separated the mainland from the island. The water is shallow here and somewhat choppy in the fresh south-east monsoon, but sunshine laid an illusion of Mediterranean blue over the distant view, flecked with white where some small, incontinent wave slopped over in approved sea-horse style. Later in the day when wind dropped and grey, rainless clouds excluded the bright sunlight, the lake took on the appearance of a crinkled dull aluminium plate, dust-bespecked here and there with flocks of coot, cormorant, ducks, geese and pelicans.

The nearest way to Crescent Isle is undoubtedly by water from the shore-edge of the township just below the station, four miles as the crow flies. But conveniences such as this still await the advent of a swifter, larger power-driven vessel; and, after all, the trip round the road affords one a more intimate glimpse of this picturesque and spacious countryside. Much of it is fine grazing country; but understocking has had the effect, over considerable areas of it, of bringing up heavy crops of worthless rubbish that will take much industry and ingenuity to clean up. A view of distant dark-green areas of sisal catch the eye and prove, however, that modern enterprise and intense cultivation are not entirely foreign to the neighbourhood.

The Island.

The imminent approach to the island naturally concentrated attention upon its appearance; and the visitor nearing it for the first time cannot fail to be struck by the parklike, cared-for atmosphere of the place. A smooth, well-grassed slope leads up to the apex of a broadbacked ridge upon one end of which the homestead is prettily placed and half concealed amid the foliage of graceful pepper and other trees. A tiny harbour cut cunningly in a bunch of feathery papyrus, part of some derelict floating island hopelessly wrecked here, takes the boat, which slips into the grateful shelter, directly the motor stops, as silently as a finger into a glove; giving one the momentary feeling of a modern Moses in the bulrushes ere the chance to spring ashore into the springy turf presents itself and the dinghy is firmly tied to a great gnarled root of this wonderful reed. There, at the foot of that beautiful grassy slope which runs right into the clean sandy edge of the sweet-water lake—for owing to winds and current no weeds accumulate and spoil the shallow, sparkling restlessness of the wavelets on this side—a closer inspection confirms the impression of soft, close, well-cropped turf.

A few selected trees, saved for ornament and shade from the hand of the destroyer when the first great clearing of bush and scrub took place, give a familiar aspect to a scene that irresistibly reminds one of the century-old house-paddock or home pasture of some ancient English country estate;

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only a melancholy and stagnant ghost of a town when one looks around at the unrivalled scenic and climatic attractions the place possesses. But for many years no townlots have been offered for public sale by the Land Office and all urban enterprise and initiative have died down before this paralysing check to progress, combined with the distractions and sequences of five years of war and several of financial depression.

The Lake.

Until November, it is close season for shooting the lake's innumerable duck and other waterfowl. Yet, in spite of this, visitors drift up here for occasional week-ends and the hotel proprietor is doing his best with tennis, golf, and other projects or amusements, to render the district more entertaining. Boating, yachting and fishing must some day be the main attractions of this beautiful spot. But except for shoals of minnows the lake contains no fish at present; though to my knowledge there has been talk for many years of stocking it with rainbow-trout—now common in the mountain streams of the Kinangop at the back—if that species will live in such a big sheet of water, which is doubtful. The stupidity that made the country fourteen years ago refuse Roosevelt's kindly, generous and useful offer to stock this inland sea with America's most sporting lake fish, black bass, at his own expense, seems incredible when one looks back on it!

The lake alone, with pretty Crescent Isle ornamenting its southern portion, stamps the district as a notable one that some day must draw to its broad, fresh-water bosom and shores most of the holiday-makers of this and neighbouring Colonies. Its elevation, nearly 6,000 ft. above sea level, its sheltered, warm, dry, healthy climate; the ever-changing tints and vistas of its scenery as one moves around or upon it; all hold the attention and appeal to those brain cells which are reserved for storing pleasant and happy memories. On its southern side stands the great extinct volcano Longonot towering to 10,000 feet; marked at its summit with an outcrop of white quartz that, from the lake side, has the appearance of a snowdrift.

The Future.

Here surely is the future playground of East Africa; and a place capable indeed of gaining a continental reputation as a pleasure resort. Stately hotels, yacht clubs and sanatoria must arise on the lake's banks; and an annual toll of lives from foolhardy, inexperienced mariners or swimmers will doubtless be exacted in due course.

The moods of this glorious lake are infinite and hypnotic. To watch the sunrise from its western bank on a clear morning is only comparable to a private view in the front seats of the greatest transformation scene ever staged. At eventide the stupendous show is repeated in a totally different setting; and, if one goes to out-of-the-way corners for the event, it is possible also to witness simultaneously a school of hippos holding their usual sunset reception.

But when rain threatens the countryside and the mist creeps down in the night from over the Aberdares across the long, straight lip of the Kinangop Plateau, the effect after it reaches the lake is identical with the stormy grey seas that belong to the homeland of our childhood; and November on the south or east coast of England. At such times the night wrack comes rolling in rugged and brown, just as realistically as where Kingsley sang of its impressiveness. But within 24 hours almost invariably follows a realistic representation of a perfect June day on the Severn estuary, below Portishead, when the tide is up and the water calls audibly for all loungers to come and bathe. One does not, however,

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and floating islands, up to a quarter of a mile in diameter, drifting aimlessly about in British waters, that wilfully, and with malice aforethought, block the harbours and boat shelters of the semi-aquatic coast dwellers.

Legends.

The Masai have a tradition that the lake contains a monster which, from their description, must be the twin-brother of the Old Country silly-season sea-serpent. Several persons have seen this fabulous creature of the local native; and it undoubtedly consists of hundreds of some large species of water-fowl, flying, coiling and twisting in single file close together and low down over the surface of the lake; resembling the supple vertibrae of a huge, snake-like amphibian. Viewed from a distance especially in twilight or misty weather it is an awesome thing; and little imagination—or whisky—is required to make one believe that a pre-historic reptile of gigantic size has actually appeared from the hidden depths of the water.

That this district is a natural inspiration to the romantically-minded is amply proved by its effect on Sir Rider Haggard, who based some of the incidents in his well-known book "Allan Quartermain" on the experiences he gained here during a sojourn in the nineties of last century. At that time Mr. Stephen Bagge was the local official representative of the Administration and entertained the author. The mysterious passage under the mountains reached through the papyrus opening, that he tells about in one of his romances, was probably born of the discussions that took place between these two friends; and their explorations, concerning the traditional subterranean tunnel that is supposed to drain the lower waters of the lake's bottom, keeping it sweet and fresh and preventing it from overflowing. In truth, the western side of the lake possesses many traits that are mysterious and impressive; for evidences of interior fires, such as Rider Haggard conjures with in "Ayesha" and other books, are to be found in many directions.

Cattle.

Some of the finest pure-bred and grade herds and flocks in East Africa belong to this district. On the far side of the lake are Mr. Attenborough's thousand head of Herefords, famous for their quality and condition; and his neighbour Mr. Colvile runs three thousand head of cattle on his fine ranch. Around the township exist great properties, most of which are fairly well stocked up with high class cattle; but Mr. Chillingworth depastures in addition a numerous flock of merino grade and pure-bred sheep upon his estate between the railway and Longonot, on the south side of the lake.

The day is fast approaching when this neighbourhood will be a leading export dairying country, with a heavy output of butter and cheese; but no revolution of this nature can occur until the policy of sub-division is more extensively carried out. Already, however, it is inspiriting to see that attention is being turned to this policy and, as will be shewn in subsequent more detailed descriptions, a wide-spread move is on foot to cut up and throw open some of the more suitable properties for closer settlement.

At the level of the Rift Valley Hotel and around the lake the annual rainfall is low for Kenyan Highlands, averaging probably, a little under 30in., though this amount is usually claimed for it. But at the back of the carnvansera the country rises in two gigantic steps of roughly one thousand feet elevation each (making three distinct levels and climates) to the main Kinangop Plateau at 8,000. On the broad, rich, intermediate

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this illusion is accentuated by very respectable grey stone walls in the background that might have been, so far as appearance goes, erected five hundred years ago; instead of being the expression of a living man's energies during the last two decades.

Uniqueness.

Indeed if one thing more than another strikes the mind and memory in this unique and beautiful property, amongst the many surprising impressions it creates, it is the clean orderliness of its entire area. A carpet of sweet, rich grass; scattered timber obviating bareness; swelling gradual rises with never a precipice over which the most careless child could come to any harm; miles of shallow beach composed of pleasant gritty blackish sand—fine building material—grateful to the naked foot and simply beseeching one to paddle or bathe; and pervading all a mild, dry, clean air, growing boisterous at times, but always infinitely fresh and pure; with a tang doubtless due to a reinforcement of oxygen liberated by the lake weeds.

From Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza there is no parallel to this incomparable little island of perhaps 250 to 300 acres—it has never been surveyed—as a compact, self-contained farm; a perfect home; a holiday resort; or a rest-cure retreat. With three distinct crests and sites for houses, no matter what time of the day the visitor stands on any one of them the ever-changing sun, cloud and sky effects contains like a natural cinema to unroll and transform the wonderful panorama.

The Day.

The fascinated observer sees perhaps in the early morning the great volcano Longonot, almost alongside the lake, still lying daintily packed in its night attire of fleecy blanket, but now all bathed in glorious sunshine; while the vast heights of Kinangop and Kijabe remain lost in the mists of the dark hours. At this time of the day the lake waters are sparkingly choppy and the air as keen as a fine day in the Bay of Biscay. In two hours' time Longonot in deshabille is wearing a charming snowy dressing cap, as becomes an ancient dame before visiting hours; all the high ridges on the sky-line are free of cloud; eagles and hawks soar deliberately along the lake edge, knowing that in due course their delectable meat will be forthcoming from the fringe of water-weed; and the scattered houses of Naivasha show plainly their white against the sombre green of the hillside.

In the afternoon of a warm sunny day at this time of the year—for July is perhaps the coldest month—the shade is grateful where for the rest of the day it is almost too chilly to remain in long. Then the dark, stately thorn trees that shelter the shores of the lake stand out with extra distinctness against the lighter tints of the everlasting hills at the back of them. This is their hour and they take a pride in throwing, by sombre contrast, into the sunlight the scattered buildings and roofs of the few settlers who are already established around the sixty miles of this huge lake's winding coastline.

But this island, now so well laid out and parklike, has taken years of steady and expensive toil to bring to its present beauty. When Mr. Wills first took it over he found a dense impenetrable thicket spread from shore to shore, through which giant thorn trees thrust their great heads. Now it has the appearance of having been gone over with a small-tooth comb; and every weed that can interfere with the sightliness of the close, couch and Kikuyu grasses or their carrying capacity is persistently expunged. Not one rugged unpresentable

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stump remains to mar the evenness of the meadows; though some covered a hundred square feet of territory and took the work of half-a-dozen men for days to extract. An excellent vegetable garden full of maize, tomatoes, onions beans and peas to-day grows where the first whiteman landed on the bush-clad shore.

The first effort at economic utilisation followed close on the heels of the clearing. Ostriches were run here very successfully and only the long-continued fatal slump in the value of feathers finally decided the owner to reluctantly abandon the industry that brought him to Kenya. Then sheep were established and for years over 600 were carried—besides other stock—and regularly fattened on the island. There can be little doubt that the close nature of the turf and its excellent appearance as a pasture is due to some extent to this period. But Mr. Wills has a fine property of 1,000 acres on the mainland and opposite the island; and another area of 4,000 acres in the Kinangop. These estates are both cattle country and to horned stock his thoughts naturally turned. Here on the island, a mile away in the lake, no disease nor infected game can possibly penetrate. A finer site for a stud farm for pure-bred pedigree stock could hardly be found anywhere in the world. And as his stock rapidly increased, both in numbers and grade quality on his rich mainland grazing areas his inclination has steadily favoured the idea of establishing a stud of some popular and supremely useful breed, as soon as he believes Kenya is far enough advanced to warrant it.

That time is now arriving, in spite of widespread temporary depression in the stock industry; and the closing up of the Government Stock Farm in Navasha adds point to this opinion.

The rich, nutritious grasses and the long strip of highly fertile coastal land, probably 60 acres, which the island affords, for lucerne growing, stamp it as an ideal home for the Friesland.

A Cattle Arcadia.

Besides, the future of Kenya must very largely depend upon dairying; and either this fashionable and wholesale milk and beef producer, or the Ayrshire and milking shorthorn, or all of them, look like commanding an ever-enhancing demand. But there is no species of pure-bred imported stock that the island is not pre-eminently suited for or would fail to hold comfortably in its perpetual quarantine; whether it be poultry, pigs, sheep or cattle. Natural conditions prevail completely and no danger whatever occurs that necessitates the objectionable practice being adopted of closing either sheep or cattle up in bomas at night.

The morning after my arrival on the island I was awakened by the honking of a flock of wild geese which, having camped for the night round the house, was starting off to the sedge and waterweed shores for breakfast. A stroll out along the divide of the island discovered many flocks of these and other web-footed fowl.

A Sanctuary.

Three varieties of geese visit the lake and I quickly formed the opinion that Crescent Isle is a true sanctuary for bird life; perhaps the only one in East Africa, thanks to Mr. Wills's rule prohibiting shooting. The scene reminded me of a farmer in Eastern Ontario who is now famous throughout North America because he offers safety and hospitality on his property to the migrating wildfowl of that continent. This custom began almost by accident with an exhausted flock of geese whose plight appealed to

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sympathies. To-day thousands of these heavy birds and ducks rest annually on his land during their long flight from the tundra, vleis, swamps and lakes of Arctic Canada to Central America, or vice-versa. The need for protecting wildfowl is not so great in Kenya perhaps. But it soon will be; and the initial move for sanctuary has already been accomplished on Crescent Isle.

In the morning the owner and myself boarded the little boat once more and adventured forth into the bay that lies between the two horns of the crescent making the shape of the island. Hazy recollections of boyhood days long gone by, when such an island, in a climate like this, would have fulfilled all my wishes of earthly bliss, came back to me; and I secretly sorrowed, and railed at fate for a while, that the realisation of that great dream, born of a repeated consumption of Robinson Crusoe and the Swiss Family, had been so tardy.

But one could not grieve long in that calm, sunny, sheltered basin; life was too cheerful and pleasant there. Though it was impossible to discern a great swell on the beach I saw a little cove running inland and was mollified. Also early that morning I had discovered the imprint of a human foot on the sand; which, however, corresponded on enquiry to man Friday's, otherwise the Lumbwa cook. And if there was no wreck to visit as an inexhaustible mine of necessary supplies, the house had proved itself to be well stocked with good things and our voyage of discovery ran us into a school of five giant hippos (friends of the owner and glad to see us)—an event, I fancy, neither of my authorities on island life experienced or recounted.

Compound Interest.

As we left the precincts of the hippo club, the old bull staring us bovinely out of countenance while his four lady friends sneezed violently or sank and rose modestly, a huge floating mass in the distance caused the owner to relate that an occasional stroke of fortune brought an acre or two of papyrus down on his property; which, if it stuck to the shore, eventually merged with the island proper and added to the permanent area of the estate. This struck me as a system of compound interest peculiar to islands and both a simple and ingenious way of increasing one's real estate.

When evening came we walked the rounds of the pleasant shore, until it was dark; staying out carelessly without feeling any need for that instinctive alertness which belongs to the twilight and night hours of all countries where coloured humanity and savage animals exist. For the atmosphere of Crescent Isle tells your sub-consciousness, as plainly as the lanes of Sussex or Devonshire do when you are home, that you are safe from harm there. And though from one's bed at night one can often clearly hear the bubbling of zebra and the growling battle-cry of lion as they kill on the mainland shore, the half-wakened sleeper knows himself to be as entirely safe from the great carnivora as in the London Zoo; or as the island also is from an invasion of snakes and ticks.

Here on his island at 6,500ft. elevation—over half a mile in the air above the highest point in England—and on his neighbouring properties, Mr. Wills has performed a notable feat of pioneering for a man who came straight out of a leading commercial house of Calcutta and took up his land with no farming experience whatever behind him in 1901. He was forced to return to the office desk for another five years, but in 1906 he started in earnest and has not left the country since even on holiday. To-day after 18 years' work he has

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little to reproach himself with from the direction of wasted time or misdirected endeavour.

The possession of his island has, however, amusingly enough, occasioned some comment amongst the officials who from time to time have visited it and partaken of the owner's hospitality. One tactful gentleman after expressing his opinion that the isle should never have been given out to a private settler—unless presumably he had applied for it himself—explained away his remark to the indignant owner by trying to enthuse him with the idea that it would have been a perfect site for a jail or a lunatic asylum!

Perhaps the sorest and most chronic seat of annoyance with Mr. Wills is towards those who, though not landowners and long since departed from the district, succeeded in preventing the consummation of Mr. Roosevelt's fine offer to stock the lake, absolutely untenanted except by frogs and a small minnow, with America's famous black bass. It is fourteen years since this offer was turned down and there is no sign of any rainbow trout appearing; neither is there any reliable evidence that this stream dweller ever does live in lakes. Yet still nothing is done to supply the one great deficiency of this lovely sheet of fresh water.

(c) Kinangop Plateau.

Caught up in a chariot of fire, a powerful, easy-running Hupmobile, from the comfortable verandah of the Rift Valley Hotel, I was within a few minutes gliding heavenwards like a modern Elijah, up the two giant steps that lead to the Kinangop Plateau and the Aberdares.

My conductor and I breasted the last rise to the 8,000 ft. elevation in about thirty minutes, obtaining a glimpse of Mr. Ray's picturesque red-roofed homestead in the ravine far below our mountain road and a distant view of the great lake amidst its hills, just before emerging into a new world of vast treeless, undulating, close-cropped prairie land. At its further side, miles away, loomed the bulky vastness of the Aberdare range, rising to 13,000 feet.

A cold fresh air smote us with the smell of an English west breeze, when it blows in Spring across a semi-dormant countryside, just about to break into crocuses, bluebells or primroses. While, behind us, we had left at 6,300 feet the grass browning off into hay and dry reed, before us lay a broad, seemingly almost illimitable, expanse of vivid green pasture with not a dry straw amongst it even where the seeding heads waved here and there alone or in small clumps in the flowing atmosphere.

Over long patches of extra sweet and severely grazed turf, through or past old deserted Masai bomas or night stockades, locally termed "manyattas" after the language of their creators—each marked by intense growth of grass, weeds or a virulent type of nettle—and across rough patches of mole-hill land that test the springs of any car to their utmost, we piloted for Ketori homestead, situated in the left centre of this vast plateau.

Ketori Homestead.

There, in a dip of the undulating plain alongside the running Telagra that gives its name to another well-known estate further on, we found rest and accommodation for the first stage of our trip. Comfortable stone and bamboo buildings, in the centre of a strongly fenced series of enveloping paddocks, housed us for the night; a cheery fireside warming us, after the chill of evening had settled around the place. And glad one can be of the single nook at this situation, for as many as 15 degrees of frost have been registered here.

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In the neighbourhood of this homestead a great deal of experimental tree-planting and other development has been going on for years. Both time and thought have been spent in looking for the right types of exotic vegetation to grow on this hitherto naked area; and to-day some interesting and successful results are visible. Blue gum and cupressus plantations have reached a stage where they are increasingly able now to break the prevalent winds.

A riot of colour from many a Northern European flower that is seldom or never seen in similar perfection at lower altitudes of Kenya brought to mind memories of sweet old English cottage and country gardens. At the time of our visit were blooming, amongst others, tritomeas, carnations, irises, pansies, hollyhocks, petunia, chrysanthemums, roses, delphinia, both Oxford and Cambridge, Antirrhinum in a dozen different tints, verbena, gladiola and violets. A brilliant red gladiola is native to the Kinangop as also are delphinia and various species of verbena; and these indigenous flowers have been found worthy of a place in the garden.

Sheep and Cattle.

Both sheep and cattle are depastured at Keteri and, from an original 50 ewes, a flock of grade merinoes and black-faced Suffolks have been produced running into thousands. Steady improvement, by the utilisation of pure-bred rams has been fostered; and to-day a fine stamp of selected Merino grades, with good fleeces that grow heavier each generation, comprise the best flock. Further importations of rams from some of the world's best-known strains are being arranged; and there seems no reason why the quality and quantity of the individual clip here should not be raised to that of Australia. The healthiness, sturdiness and good constitution of these Keteri sheep are apparent on a cursory examination.

As to cattle, the tendency on this and several other leading Kinangop estates is to concentrate upon Frieslands with a view to producing large quantities of milk in the near future, and also in order to provide a fine milking strain of pure-breds for the settlers intent upon building up first-class dairy herds throughout Kenya. On the Kinangop there are to-day some of the finest of this type of stock it is possible to secure. The pure-bred pedigree Frieslands of Kipipiri, for example, include seven from the best South-African strains; three bought at the Naivasha Government Farm sale; and six from the celebrated English Nache herd, four of whom come from 2,000-gallon cows and two from 1,700-gallon cows. When it is remembered that less than forty 2,000-gallon cows have been produced in the world's cattle history, the pre-eminence of this latter strain of milch stock promises well for the dairy future of the Kinangop.

Aristocrats.

Since their importation to Kenya, the sum of 10,000 guineas has been given for the father ("2nd Series" by name) of some of these cattle. No less than seventeen bulls from the best producing strains of England and South-Africa have already been brought to this out-of-the-way corner of the world; proving that it is not merely an isolated or sporadic effort, but rather a deliberate conspiracy to place Kinangop stock in the forefront of the world's most valuable economic money-makers. Nor are the settlers on this Plateau letting the matter of milk production remain here. They are establishing a co-operative butter factory at a central point to take the local output and turn it into a standard, marketable article.

An immense dam has been banked up at the back of Keteri homestead (which is 15 miles from Naivasha station) with a view to the eventual creation of power. This

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kept as a sanctuary for the wild-fowl that throng the waters of the plateau and they are learning increasingly to take advantage of this protection. Weed has however become a nuisance in this dam and the services of a tame hippo are urgently required to keep it down. Ketiri is managed by Mr. Turner, well-known in local natural history circles; and indeed much further afield, for he has recently been presented with the silver medal of the Swedish Royal College of Science for field work.

To Telaga.

Next morning a jolly party left betimes for Telaga homestead, six miles away, the motor-car steering a course across the prairie and negotiating the river at a natural ford. In front of us the Aberdares, grew ever larger and more formidable as we approached them. One could now clearly discern that their topmost areas are covered with close bamboo forest; their lower slopes being clad in giant cedar and other umbrageous arboreal growth. To our left rose grand and massive, like a mighty starfish, the mountain property, Kipipiri, of Sir John Ramsden. This great hill, 11,000 ft. in elevation, which is joined to the main Aberdares by a ridge, over which lies a broad pass would make three or four Donyo Sabuka, that great ornamental mound in the Athi Plains visible from almost any point around Nairobi.

As we approached the homestead along a rich manyatta bank that a generation ago, before the Masai were moved from that country, must have been the nightly rendezvous of thousands of cattle, the tussocks became too rough for motor transport and the last mile was accomplished on foot. A roomy, solidly-built, ivy-covered stone house was waiting to receive us.

On its southern side two mature Japanese plum trees, covered with bloom, were growing against the stone, for all the world like walled fruit in a sheltered nook of some old English kitchen-garden. A blaze of antirrhinums surrounded the house, and soft velvet-like, Kikuyu grass lawns lent their vivid green contribution to the general beauty of a spot which is well protected from the prevalent winds by the proximity of the Aberdares.

The bulk of Telaga's eleven thousand acres is composed of slopes and foothills of this range; and indeed runs well up its sides, giving the estate an inexhaustible supply of firewood and lumber in addition to the sources of the Telaga and several other streams.

Small Holdings.

Telaga has been recently cut up into a number of medium sized farms all on running water; some blocks, notably the one with the house and extensive stone outhouses, dairy etc., reaching a maximum of over 1,000 acres; while others, more particularly those with richer bush soil, being only 100 and 400 in extent. Dairying will always be a leading industry in this part of Kenya, and I think English mutton sheep are going to do well here also. But owing to the absence of frost, as compared with the bleaker and more exposed open prairie country of which Ketiri is typical, a most promising speciality for those sheltered slopes, that overlook practically the whole Kinangop with the distant Mau and Longonot on their horizon, is probably deciduous fruits. Here is a land where the more hardy, yet delicately flavoured, Northern European apples, plums, strawberries, raspberries, cherries and pears, that demand above all things temperateness should flourish.

And sufficient evidence is not lacking on either side of the estate that this industry may be undertaken seriously on a commercial scale; for

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both on Captain Fey's property further to the west, along the same series of foothills and at an elevation of over 9,000 feet, as well as at the Forest Station—of which more later—all these fruits have been successfully grown for years. The one danger that occurred to me as likely to be most troublesome is hail. But careful enquiry tended to show that this affliction, when it comes, is light along the foothills, falling more heavily miles away on the open Kinangop plain. Poultry also, particularly the heavy British and Chinese breeds, should be a profitable line up here; and the convenience of ample building material in the shape of easily split cedar and bamboos is an advantage of the very first importance. The rainfall is from 60 to 100 inches; or one of the best in East Africa.

More Homes.

Next morning, in delicious champagne-like air and resplendent mild sunshine, I made my way on mule back over the rich brown loam of these foothills north-west towards Kapipiri. Broken wreaths of mist lay in the ravines of the imminent Aberdares far above my head in the right; while a wide white fleecy sea of cloud covered the surface of the prairie land below me on the left, to roll back presently like a scroll revealing the pleasant pastures with their grazing herds and a number of scattered homesteads, whose iron or shingle roofs glistered white in the early sun. In some places the bamboo, that wonderful Brobdingnagian grass in and out of which elephant, giant hogs and bongo play like shrew mice in a field of wheat, came far down towards the open or scrub clad slopes; and an occasional patch of giant heather caught the eye. Across rich banks of potential arable, fruit and dairying land, intersected by running brooks of innocent mountain water, some of the choicest areas of which, in sunken specially sheltered spots, are already temporarily occupied by warmth-loving native Kikuyu squatters—perhaps the best judges of Kenya soils in the country—who also grow their maize crops far up the hills amongst the timber, my road eventually brought me to another stone-built house belonging to the same estate. Here the balance of our party soon joined us, having gone far round to get their car through, and we sojourned pleasurably at this homestead for the rest of the day and the next night. Again a bright patch of garden cheered the eye with English flowers and we were all interested by a large native bumble bee who, not understanding how, or not being built, to extract honey from the exotic antirrhinum in the normal way, namely through its dragon-like mouth, had solved the difficulty by boring a hole at the base of each flower; abstracting the precious fluid therefrom even as a dipsomaniac might broach a keg surreptitiously with a gimlet.

Forest Station.

Just across the valley from this house, which is named Minch's, lies the Forest Station; and we soon found the track to it; for much useful information as to the capacity of the district is to be picked up there. A truly gorgeous garden, with a surfeit of beautiful flowers, greeted us, including a so-called giant lobelia and wild banana from the mountains. Fruit trees, moved up from the open plain where they had failed for years to grow satisfactorily, have on this sheltered slope developed rapidly and borne heavily. Plantations of blue gum, Guatemala, Louisiana and Macrocarpa cupressus, planted in 1916, have attained a considerable height and diameter of trunk. They exhibit every symptom of vigorous vitality. Many seedling trees are produced here ready for planting out.

Fishes.

At the foot of the Forest Station is the old trout hatchery from which

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the Forestry Department, who originally took the task in hand, arranged to stock Kinangop rivers with this succulent fish. The hatchery is now falling to decay; for seven years have elapsed since it was shut down.

But one of the most beautiful, fairylike woodland pools it would be possible to see anywhere—a place for nymphs and gnomes, satyrs and brownies—with a vigorous stream running through it that keeps it sweet and lively, still marks the spot.

Here the record rainbow trout of Kenya was caught—the man who ate it being present at my visit and confirming unashamedly the statement of the fish expert who grew it—which turned the scale at 8 lbs. 6 oz. though only three and a half years old. We rested contentedly for a time around this lovely pool, with its verdant border of drooping forest trees; adorned with lichen and mistletoe. Here if one lies still and waits long enough, come in the all-day forest twilight or at eventide many a beautiful wild creature, from leopard to bush-buck, to take the water. But all this country is full of game, big and small; and the bird lover may at times get fine bags of duck, quail or spur fowl (Jackson's Francolin). The day has gone by, however, when one's shooting can be done off the verandah in one's pyjamas. Those who wish to get near game in this part of Kenya must to-day show a fair amount of energy, and some skill. With these, no trophies of the biggest, rarest or most desirable animals, for which the Colony is world-renowned, need be missing to sportsmen settlers of the Kinangop.

Closer Settlement.

Minch's is on the Aberdare slopes; and the next morning we ranged along another magnificent area of forest bush and mountain glades, which it is the intention of the owners to sub-divide and throw open for selection. Already local applications have been received, even before survey, and there can be little doubt that the near future will see a comparatively thick, rural population skirting the Aberdares. The present areas actually affected by the settlement designs of these big landowners is about 13,000 acres at prices and on terms that should be attractive to many medium capitalists; and there will doubtless be more to follow.

The last section, on to which the party moved next day, lies close to Kipipiri; a gradual descent taking place from Minch's in that direction.

Every half-mile of these foothills possesses its perennial stream, so that each block will be able to run out its furrow to supplement by irrigation the excellent rainfall of the district. Here the forest descends further on to the cultivable slopes and the rich brown loam seems richer and deeper than ever. An interesting experiment is being tried here by Major Buxton on a reserved patch of forest country specially selected for the purpose.

Tea.

The crop that is being tested here is tea; and there seems no reason whatever why this necessity of life should not do at least as well at Limoru, Kericho, or in the higher lands of Uganda.

The private nursery on the Aberdare foothills, close to Kipipiri, lands fair, though only recently established, to rapidly out-rival the Government Forest Station already described, but naturally enough it concentrates on vegetation of immediate economic utility to the settlers expected within the next few years, rather than on mere forest aboriculture. Yet this department is not entirely neglected and some of the world's finest and most ornamental trees are being raised; amongst which is that notable and historic giant, the cedar of Lebanon, as well as the Wellingtonia, Gigantia of

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Cultivation. Personally it is my opinion that the more valuable deciduous trees such as the sweet-acorn oak, beech, hickory, maple and walnut will all grow luxuriantly up here.

Two branches of horticultural work are however rendering this private nursery on Ketiri remarkable. The first, and most important, is the splendid growth and vitality shewn by the 4,000 fruit trees and bushes comprising the first importation with a view to locally acclimatising the world's choicest varieties of pears, apples cherries, gooseberries, currants, plums, gages, etc. Many of these, it was feared, would be dead or never recover from the delays that occurred in hot Mombasa, after their long voyage; but they are all shaping beautifully. The second is European flowers for the management seems to have taken the catalogue of some noted horticultural firm and imported samples of all their seeds; and the result is most promising.

Much of this wonderful success may be due to the acknowledged skill of Mr. Minshall, who has been in charge of the enterprise from its inception; and who has for many years been Government forester on the neighbouring forest station. But much of it is also undoubtedly attributable to the magic of natural conditions of soil and climate in country where, when the wet season is on, any muff may cut a slip of cauliflower and, by taking the one precaution to stick it in loose ground where weeds cannot choke it, produce a vegetable that would take first prize at most English rural shows.

Only a few miles beyond the Ketiri nursery lies the homestead of Kiphiri. At this spot the bulk of the pure-bred Frieslands, already alluded to, are being looked after, and the nucleus of what must later become a world-famous local herd is already in existence.

The white population of Kenya is so small and the large districts which comprise its so-called "Settled" areas are at present so sparsely inhabited that quite a small influx of people to any one of them might easily upset the present numerical balance and give the neighbourhood securing it pride of place in local civilised importance.

One leaves the Aberdares feeling that a little business ingenuity may largely change this first rate grazing country into a land of small heavily-cultivated fruit and dairy farms.

(d) Kinangop to Naivasha.

A bright, sunny, bracing morning sped my departure from the shadow of the Aberdares; and a companionable mule, by no means reluctant to help me out of the district, carried me along in the direction of Mr. J. L. Cotter's fine grazing farm, Carrigtual, four miles away from my starting place.

A notably deep, broad, picturesque ravine, through which a brawling mountain trout stream raced, formed the last barrier between me and my objective, also acting as a very effective boundary to the property on which a cheery reception awaited me.

Small as properties in this neighbourhood go, Mr. Cotter's 2,500 acres nevertheless comprise a very fine estate, the true carrying capacity of which will only become apparent after many years' continuous stocking. Every year shows an increase in the animals depasturing here; and, every year, the spread of clovers, wild legumes and all sorts of other nutritious grasses replace the ranker, tussocky or wiry herbage that the traffic of heavy-horned stock tramps out.

Bona-fide Kenyans.

Mr. Cotter, an old regular army man, who retired after some years in India from the Royal Irish

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Rides as long ago as 1905, has that natural love and judgment for stock which is a hereditary gift of the cattleman; and he has succeeded in accumulating some very fine grades and pure-breds on Carrigtual. His seventeen years' residence in East Africa, including Tanganyika (less his war service, which comprised experience on several fronts) gives him a profound knowledge of conditions throughout this part of the continent; for there are few districts with which he has not, at some time or other, become intimately acquainted. It is therefore of special interest to find that he regards the Kinangop as the pick of Kenya for home-making and stock-farming; and he has signalised this deliberately formed opinion by permanently establishing himself on this estate, with which he is determined no offer will induce him to part.

Here, with his active and enthusiastic young wife, his splendid Frieslands, and a fine mixed herd of culled dairy stock, his comfortable home, and the many miles of well-stocked trout streams that practically encircle and sub-divide his property, this settler is quite contented and envies the lot of no man. A day and a night spent at this hospitable homestead only makes one long for more time to enjoy its beautiful surroundings and interesting company. One passes on feeling that here are bona fide happy Kenyans who have definitely thrown in their lot with their adopted country and hanker after no other.

It is interesting to learn that an excellent income is being made by Mrs. Cotter from her large flocks of Rhode Islands, turkeys, and other poultry, for which an extended connection and market have been established. Mr. Cotter, too, is amongst the experimentalists. Though the altitude of his farm is fully 8,000 feet and its situation right out on the plateau where frost may happen at any time, he once, with commendable optimism, put in a small plantation of coffee. This he tended carefully, deducing much encouragement from its progress, until unfortunately one of his mules rolled upon it. Since this set-back occurred he has concentrated more closely than ever upon his cattle and is disinclined to venture further at present into the pursuits of those who are disciples of Cain.

A "Three-Climate" Farm.

On my way back from the Aberdares I bethought me of hospitality extended in past days by Mr. and Mrs. Mervyn Ray at their fine estate, Nunjoro. The homestead nestled below me, and even as good wine needs no bush, so the memory of hearty welcomes induced me to leave the rugged escarpment road, a few hundred yards after it dips down from the edge of Kinangop Plateau, where the highest view of Lake Naivasha is obtainable. Dropping along a convenient path in the scrub, I landed accurately and quickly before the shaded verandah, which is sheltered by the red roof; attractively visible from above, as also from many another angle along lower levels. There are few country homes in Kenya that strike one with the general physical beauty and spacious friendly orderliness of the surroundings of this residence; and there are also few where jovial sociability are more in evidence. Only eight or ten years have elapsed since the newly married owners settled here and began their task of patient development. With the initial advantages of a water supply from the neighbouring ravine and an extensive view of the lower country including the lake, the six-roomed stone house was built. Then lawns and pleasure gardens were laid out; convenient and strong stables, piggeries, cattle and sheep dips, cowsheds and stores

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erected; land cleared, cultivated and paddocked; and fruit and vegetable gardens planted. More recent additions include a comfortable two-roomed guest house, now being used as the children's school, and a well fenced-in murrum gravel tennis court, sunk in the side of the escarpment at a picturesque spot well protected by forest trees from all strong winds.

It came therefore as something like a shock to learn, during a pleasant evening ramble round the stock bomas, that Mr. Ray, who is now busily planning a long promised and well-earned trip home, thinks of selling the homestead and a thousand acres of the surrounding land—the estate runs into five thousand—and starting all over again alongside another of his ravines further east on his return. But many men, richly endowed with land in Kenya, who are not too old for a little effort and enterprise, are moving in the direction of subdivision in some form or other. After all, if people cannot be found willing to give newcomers a chance to participate, at reasonable prices, in the big properties that they have assembled, very little further progress can take place in many districts. But I envy the buyer who secures the homestead of Nunjoro and its adjoining well placed diversified 1,000 acres. With £4,000 to buy the property and £1,000 to invest in stock, a permanent, comfortable living and delightful home should be assured simultaneously.

The homestead at Nunjoro stands at an elevation of 7,600 feet, and the escarpment on which it has been built is sufficiently sloping to make the ascent easy from the intermediate step; which consists of a couple of miles of broad, rich, valley-like flat, lying before and between the residence and Naivasha; eleven miles away by the public thoroughfare, seven by the farm's own private road, and over a thousand feet below. On the adjacent flat country opposite the house, and forming part of the intermediate step between Naivasha and the Kinangop proper, Mr. Ray has cleared off much of the original cedar and considerable areas are now open nutritious grass land. On this and other parts of the big estate graze a carefully culled and improved generation of pure-bred and grade shorthorns and Frieslands—the latter having come quite recently into favour here.

Much good shorthorn blood has been directly imported and the general quality of the herd is really superb. As an example of the pedigree stock being perpetuated by Mr. Ray, the following strains may be cited as represented in his bulls; namely, such blood as Cambridge Rose, Heydon Rose, Barrington Duchess, and Underley cows. Also Waterloo and other blood from the world's best known British herds.

Nunjoro is not only sound stock country, free from disease, but it is also very well watered and still possesses large areas of valuable cedar. Native squatters grow maize crops on hundreds of acres of land on the escarpment sides; providing at a fair price all the grain food required on the farm for man and beast. A considerable weekly output of butter from the property goes to Nairobi; and the skim milk residue is greatly prized for pig fattening. Mr. Ray surprised me completely by expressing an optimistic opinion on the vexed pig question and stating that he was actually making, at the present time, £1 per head on fats that he prepares for the market. This is the first good word the writer has heard for the local pig industry for some time; and though this margin of profit during the existing slump is not great, it nevertheless mounts up when as a rule a few fat pigs are sent off every week to market. It speaks well for this settler's adaptibility that he, an old Cambridge man not brought up to the

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trade of farming, should be as successful as he is in the many different lines that belong to a large sized, general farm.

The secret of his success in pigs is due to several factors. He begins by having a good strain; for on to Berkshires he has grafted an infusion of Tamworth blood in all his breeding sows and uses regularly Long Black boars. Then he never allows the young pigs to go back in condition from the day of their birth. They are fed, and well fed, on nutritious foods, by carefully supervised, trained natives, five or six times a day. Their ration consists of skim milk, boiled maize, lucerne, damaged wheat, potatoes and other vegetables, all grown on the farm. As a result, at six or seven months, he turns out a 200 lb. fat pig that would do credit to any piggery in the world.

It is interesting to note that a number of good horses is maintained on the estate and that only one death has occured from horse-sickness in seven years, while a very fine and carefully assembled strain of Rhode Island Red is also kept on the farm, their care being the special department of Mrs. Ray. Great attention is paid to the producing of a high-class, pure-bred type of this popular breed for sale to settlers throughout Kenya and the name of this strain of R.I.R. poultry stands deservedly high amongst the fanciers of Kenya. Sheep also figure as an important source of revenue on Nunjoro, which has proved itself to be excellent sheep country.

To the east of Mr. Ray are several neighbours all with "three-climate" farms similar to his own, i.e., reaching from the Naivasha level, through the intermediate step up to the Kinangop plateau. They include Mr. Pickford, formerly D.C. at Naivasha, and Colonel Henderson, a comparatively recent comer. On the other, or western, side of the farm, Mr. Cartwright's big property also stretches through the three belts of similar country to the highest level.

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five-mile glide to the beautiful flower-dropped spacious plain upon which the executive buildings stand. That trip provided me with a substantial foretaste of the possibilities of this fine estate. For, rising gradually all the morning, we passed bank after bank and slope after slope of alternately good stock, dairying or arable areas.

A halt at Ridge farm with its snug stone house, enabled the fine de-seeding and scutching factories to be inspected; the former being temporarily in use, after the necessary adjustments had been made, for cleaning and winnowing barley, a crop coming steadily into favour here. A little further on we came across a wide, self-sown field of this cereal, and much flax being spread out for dew-retting.

Thence we swerved to the left, visiting the homestead of Mr. North Lewis, a recent arrival who is vigorously developing his property bought from the Company; passed Farm No. 2, leased last year to an English settler, and—passing another complete flax factory—toiled through a picturesque gap in the hills, downwards once more, to the Ololeobar valley, where we found Mr. Ferguson, the flax expert, engaged, at the principal factory of the estate, in preparing a fine lustrous quality of lint for the London market.

On the upward run we faced great wooded escarpments backed by the huge bulk of Kipipiri. Sir John Ramsden's vast estate, bought a few years ago from the Company, and the heaven-scraping wall of the Aberdares. On the return journey all the wide plain of the Rift Valley lay before us; bounded by the Mau escarpment, Longonot and its sister volcano Buswa with lake Naivasha, like a blue tinted piece of looking glass, lying on its back under the shadow of the eternal mountains. Truly a beautiful and desirable outing that, under the normal pleasant climatic conditions we enjoyed, few countries in the world could rival.

Flax.

Mr. Ferguson, whose keenness and optimism regarding the future of flax in Kenya was inspiriting to encounter, is working a 30-berth scutch mill at 8,000 feet elevation. His natives are now highly trained and he has turned out as much as three and a quarter tons of high grade fibre in one week. After a sociable lunch in his prettily situated stone bungalow, set in the midst of a garden full of Old Country flowers, we moved on, following the down road towards the main homestead.

En route we passed off the Syndicate land and across the spot where on a previous visit I stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Grist, a stout-hearted pair of Somersetshire farming folk who for years milked their own large herd of cows themselves and made their own cheeses—just as if they were living round Highbridge or Cheddar, and not under the Equator a mile higher in the air than their native county.

Their lease ran out, I understand, and even the large profits they were temporarily realising were not a sufficient inducement to run the risk of land purchase in the uncertain conditions of wartime and at an enhanced price that time has shown was unduly inflated. They were shrewd judges; but it is a pity the district lost this couple and painful in a new land, to see the empty homestead lying idle.

On this return trip we also passed a field of self-sown oats, three feet high and as regular as if drilled in. The crop looked as if it would go twenty bushels to the acre at least, although it is its second volunteer year.

Stock.

A representative show of stock was assembling for inspection on

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our return. It requires no great knowledge of pastoral conditions to decide from the general appearance of this country that its grazing qualities are high and distinctly superior to many places one passes further up or down the line. It is also clean, healthy country.

The appearance of these herds, numbering about 2,500 in all, confirmed the high opinion already formed. A fine lot of first cross Friesland and Shorthorn cows and heifers were examined all in sleek, comfortable condition and proving that the grade is going to be a sure money maker in this area. No intensive dairying is carried on, the cows just running out with their respective bulls, most of which are either grade shorthorn or Friesland.

Some specially fine, well selected mobs of native, mostly Boran cows who have mothered many of the splendid grades, in other herds, attracted attention; for so sturdy and well developed a standard of animal has been got together that one is forced to the conclusion that the business of scientific selection and improvement on European lines for this quaint, picturesque native breed is still in its infancy and may some day amply repay continuous attention.

Big of barrel, broad of beam, with capacious milking bags, many of these picked specimens at least show all the fundamental essentials of a useful dairy type. The Boran with its shapely, ornamental hump and dewlap is usually a greyish or creamy white, a colour very distinct from the sharp, clean white of certain British breeds, against which local experience has formed an adverse opinion chiefly owing to its vulnerability to the sun's rays.

The total losses among the Syndicate herds for last year amounted to three per cent. only; as compared with 6.98 per cent., which, according to the official agricultural census was the average for all the European-owned cattle in the Colony.

Mr. Plenderleith, a wise and practical stockman with many years' experience of Kenyan conditions, is in charge of this department and is the sort of man that no estate of this kind should be without. Greatly to his credit are the returns of increase during the last few years. His summing up of the value of the different crosses and breeds shows interesting results of definite value to the beginner here.

Of one herd of 200 grade cows he can this year record an increase of exactly 200; or 100 per cent. But he finds that, as the standard of pure, imported European blood is raised, so is the risk of loss, damage and accident; and he is definitely in favour of only a medium infusion, in the main herds, of the superior breeds—at least until the leading imported varieties have had some generations of acclimatisation in the country.

One could not help noticing the infusion of Hereford blood in many of the young stock, for the potency of this strain is very great. Though some years have elapsed since the sires belonging to this grand beef strain have been withdrawn the estate still produces, from a high grade Hereford herd, a few descendants that kill at 750 to 800 lbs. weight.

An interesting group (in charge of Masai herdsmen) of twenty pure-bred and grade bulls of all the leading breeds, in which the growing penchant for Friesland was clearly discernible, also caught the eye. It is the custom here, notwithstanding the estate's freedom from disease, to dip all stock every seven days. And this has the effect of both cleaning the herds and training them to the operation; so

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CHAPTER III.

GILGIL.

A True Stock and General Farming Country.

Gilgil station at 6,570 feet, about 20 miles from Naivasha, is the local headquarters of the East African Lands Development Company Limited, still popularly known in Kenya as the Syndicate.

The great estate of this concern, running into over 200,000 acres (freeholded for the greater convenience and security of buyers) dominates the neighbourhood; and its operations and activities reflect reliably, where they do not influence, the prosperity of all this countryside and to some extent even of Kenya itself.

If flax, stock and general farming are prosperous the hum of human movement here can, figuratively speaking, be heard as far as Mombasa; for the executive of this great property have ever been on the *qui vive* to take advantage of any breeze of good fortune that may even temporarily fill the Colony's sails; and they have never spared expenditure or begrudged the employment of white-men when the chances of land sales or the possibilities of remunerative development seemed rosy.

The last time I was in this neighbourhood the flax boom was in full swing and the European staff at headquarters numbered, as far as I remember, about twenty energetic and optimistic employees. To-day, consequent upon general worldwide depression, this number has shrunk to half a dozen loyal stalwarts; but there is that in their eyes that implies imminent action directed to attract to the settlement of this grand area of country some of the Empire's floating population known to be looking for new homes and a fresh means of livelihood.

One comes indeed instinctively to the conclusion that the Syndicate is merely in the trough of a wave already rising; that they have been, during the last year or two, gathering strength *pour mieux sauter;* and that one will soon see them break out on some new and wisely broadminded policy or programme that must make their Home farm reserve a place of intense activity. Already the expert advice and assistance of those running this estate are freely proffered on flax, stock and general land matters and increasingly sought after by settlers in the locality.

For, right through to Rumuruti or the distant Aberdares, this high country is sweet, healthy and alternately fine grazing or fertile agricultural land. It is a well-watered country full of picturesqueness and varied scenery, providing a large number of good home sites within view of spacious valleys, green plains, mighty mountains or rugged ranges; with an occasional glimpse here and there from a favoured spot of lake Naivasha.

From the comfortable, solid homestead of the estate, situated on a bend of the Gilgil river—where the rainfall averages 30 inches—and surrounded at a respectful distance by the offices, outbuildings and snug residences

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of the staff, one may travel north along the main Rumuruti road for 35 miles on the property, the rainfall increasing steadily as one goes forward. It is of course rather a province or a county than a farm. One rejoices to see the endeavour that has been, and is being, put into the business of getting people to come and settle on it; and amongst the buildings are workshops which not only do all the technical work of the estate, even to making furniture, but are beginning to help the up-country settler by mending wagons, etc.

The Right Spirit.

Mr. Dugmore, acting manager, in the absence of Captain Gibson on leave, is an active, practical South-African with that hereditary pioneering instinct belonging to many descendants of the 1820 Albany settlers. It does not need a long conversation with him to discover that his heart is in his work and he is keenly desirous of enhancing the prosperity of his employers and raising the status of Kenya as a whiteman's country by hastening the occupation of his district with a good class of settler.

Plans for a fine township adjoining the railway, for small holdings outside this urban area, for scattered suburban residences along the lower slopes of a convenient series of hills within a mile and a half of the station, and for irrigation plots have been elaborated; while at the back of the earmarked territory these proposals will naturally absorb, lie great stretches open for selection almost anywhere on the estate not already applied for by earlier candidates. To-day the Syndicate is prepared to consider any proposals for the settlement of their lands that may suit the means of *bona-fide* farming applicants—which is the right spirit for a pioneering country.

Three main rivers traverse the territory; the Gilgil, the Little Gilgil and the Melowa; into which ran a number of tributaries, chief among them being the Ololeobar, that pours into the first named; and the Tarasha, Simba and Oleanda, into the last, forming in combination the fine Morendat that is the main source of lake Naivasha's supply.

The great escarpment, marching north-east on the left side of the Morendat, is the same cedar-clad wall of the Rift Valley upon which Mr. Mervyn Ray's home, described in a previous chapter, is situated ten miles further down and the last barricade to the Kinangop plateau.

My first evening on the homestead was spent in the cheery company of members of the staff, and one or two young fellows from Home and India who are enjoying the hospitality of the estate while getting acclimatised to this new country. The acting manager is, very wisely, encouraging visitors of this class; and at present is also able to rent, at an almost nominal figure, furnished houses for the occupation of family men who are anxious to look round before they buy.

Local Nairobi people too are glad to take advantage of this chance for change of air and holiday at low cost in a good sporting country. Amongst those who have taken advantage of this opening for comfort, combined with the excellent shooting the property affords, are Colonel Jennings, retired from Indian Army; Major Hankin on leave from India; Major Ward, of the Imperial Wireless Commission; Captain Reid; Captain Savage; and others, some of whom have remained over a year.

Next morning in Mr. Dugmore's company I was able to make the round of the circular road that threads the main portion of the Home Farm's Reserve, an area approximating 40,000 acres; returning towards evening down a

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that, if sold into areas where dipping is essential, they are accustomed to undergoing this treatment.

A novelty, in the shape of a foot-bath for cattle, is also in constant use with very beneficial results, for it entirely minimises the danger of foot and mouth disease; and one is inclined to think it (with an inoculating crush such as the estate also possesses) a necessity on all stock farms. The cost of constructing this one was only £10.

The piggery on the Home farm is one of the strongest, roomiest and best designed in Kenya Colony. It was not with too cheerful a spirit one was ushered round the premises of the "gintleman" who traditionally—but quite erroneously now-a-days—is supposed to pay the "rint." The styes contained numbers of well-bred, well-proportioned youngsters, carefully graded into companies, according to their suitability for experiencing those solemn ceremonial rites over which the butcher presides, and which every well-dispositioned, correctly-reared pig should look forward to as the apotheosis of his career.

The parents of these candidates for porcine honours belong to the finest breeds of Berkshire and Long Black in the country and are indeed aristocrats. But at the moment fats are difficult to sell; though a feeling of optimism regarding this industry is in the air here.

Sheep to the number of several thousand are de-pastured on the property and, now that the wire-worm trouble of former years is completely under control, are demonstrating the accuracy of all experienced visitors' prognostications that here is indeed a true and trustworthy sheep country. The average monthly losses for the last nine months have been .9 per centum.

(b) Stock Farm in Upper Gilgil Devoted to Pure-bred Ayrshires.

A before-breakfast start from Gilgil Hotel in Major H. White's buckboard, pulled by five mules, enabled us to reach Curragilla in about three hours through bracing, sunny air and the pleasant, diversified scenery that is typical of Syndicate country. A journey under these conditions opens one's eyes to the possibilities of a means of conveyance that is practically extinct —if ever it existed—in Kenya.

The two-mule buggy is not an unknown form of transport here, though somewhat monotonous and uncertain, but it becomes a very different proposition when three more docile, staunch and practically tireless animals are put on droski fashion in front of the two at the pole; and the whole team is handled by a clever and experienced driver.

The road towards Rumuruti had, for many miles, been subjected to a heavy downpour the day before our journey over it. Many long stretches were soft as well as uphill; for a rise of 1,500 feet lay between us and our destination. The approaches to the bridges over the Olelcundo and the little Gilgil were difficult and in such a condition that no motor-car could have got through until the worst places had dried up somewhat.

Half-a-dozen ox-teams were in difficulties along the route as we passed. Yet this practical and invincible outfit sped merrily along under the control of its quiet, masterful owner; skimming diagonally across or entirely dodging the worst spots and negotiating what often looked like forlorn hopes with almost magic buoyancy as those twenty fleet and sturdy hoofs found footing and, with their burden of four passengers, unhesitatingly obeyed the call made upon them.

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Automatic Whip.

The whole performance recalled vividly similar experiences in far away Gippsland and other rugged Antipodean coastal areas where this sort of driving is a commonplace of pioneering life. For that atmosphere gave Major White his skill with the ribbons; and he possesses a technical familiarity with harnessing and handling draught animals,—common to country-bred Australians—that has made his Abyssinian mule team the wonder of the Rumuruti road.

Not the least interesting feature of the experience was his animated, automatic whip. This consisted of a well-trained, fleet-footed native who, without a word from the driver, descended from his back seat on all critical occasions, and, like a human gadfly, attached the team from the rear if any slackening or irresolution were noticeable.

And well the mules all knew the trying pinches or straight good pieces of track over which they were expected to put their best foot forward under the alternative of unwelcome notice from this miniature human tornado. One cannot help speculating as to whether this acquired ability to steer a light vehicle powerfully equipped with numerous draught animals easily and rapidly over difficult roads is not the finest flower of all our national and racial love for horsey sports.

Here surely is the applied science of gratuitous and apparently objectless horse racing and pleasure coaching; just as the curious and apparently senseless craze for collecting butterflies, moths and bugs in show cases eventually begot the knowledge and power to counteract insect pests by the introduction of their natural enemies. Only, in this instance, the manly sports referred to doubtless originally developed out of the exuberance and love for their metier of strong men who had conquered the transport problems of an earlier age by their skill in animal mastery. The exhibition of clever driving that I was privileged to witness is but their reapplication in the realms of utility. This is the true relationship of sport and labour. It is a finer accomplishment to possess Major White's effortless skill with the reins on a bad road than to win the Nairobi cup; and I am quite sure a knowledge of this art would pay many a settler better in Laikipia and other out-of-the-way places, where mules or horses thrive, than either racing or motor-car driving.

Curragilla, a North Queensland native name which possesses memories for its owner is 8,000 feet high, and 3,766 acres in extent, and was originally bought from the Gilgil Syndicate. One approaches the homestead along a two-mile broad ridge that forms part of the divide between Gilgil and those reputed flax lands lying toward lake Olbollossat and the Aberdares.

Here one is close to the overpowering and fascinating personalities of great Kipipiri and the Northern Aberdares, 13,000 feet high. A fair amount of arable land crowns this ridge, but its general aspect is that of park-like, richly grassed pastoral country, changing in places to treeless areas where cultivation clearing has occurred. On either side of this wide-backed bank rise steeper cedar-clad slopes; and mountain streams run briskly along the depressions lying between them.

The timber on this estate is so good and plentiful that a first-rate modern saw-mill has been erected on a suitable site. This mill is in charge of an experienced New Zealander, Mr. Nielson, whose eighteen years at saw-milling in Kenya make him an authority on all things pertaining to lumber production.

Four saw benches, fitted with the latest inventions for automatically cutting logs into all kinds of planking and scantling are being worked,

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planted by native labour; and it is estimated that enough cedar, musharagi and podocarpus exist on the property to keep the plant going for five years.

Cattle.

But Major White's favourite branch of farming is his beautiful herd of carefully selected imported Ayrshire cattle; and their progeny, born and reared on Curragilla. Amongst these still live fourteen cows out of an original fifteen imported from Australia into Kenya in December, 1920. These cows were picked from one of the best herds in Victoria, a State that has for several decades been noted for the high quality of its favourite dairying pure-bred Ayrshire stock as well as for its practice of strengthening both constitution and milk production by natural open-air methods of treatment.

The Willowvale stud, in the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne, whence came these cows, is widely known throughout Australasia for its splendid strain of this hardy, freely milking breed. It is a principle of the management of this famous herd to keep nothing but pure, strong constitutioned Ayrshires whose record in the milking pail is the great criterion of their value; so that the dairying industry that has grown to such great proportions in Australia has been able to secure a permanent standard of high utilitarian quality from this strain.

This policy has been found of far greater economic importance to the dairying industry than mere concentration on show points. Yet the herd has never failed to score at the many provincial shows and especially at the Royal Agricultural Shows of Melbourne and Sydney; and a long succession of firsts, seconds and thirds are on record.

The grandsire of the bulk of these imported cows was "Lodestar of Oakbank," another famous Victorian herd, whose daughter, "Rayda of Oakbank," was champion cow at last year's Melbourne Royal Agricultural Show. Some of the official milk trials of the Willowvale herd have reached a flow of ver five gallons of milk daily for one month with a test of 5.2 butter fat. The butter output of others for the same period measured 22 lbs. per week.

Major White, D.S.O., late of the Australian Expeditionary Force, has from the first followed at Curragilla the traditions of Willowvale in his treatment of his beautiful nucleus imported herd. His stock graze out day and night without any pampering or special feeding. Paddocks close to the homestead, sufficiently ample for their accommodation, receive them at night; and a fierce pack of Airedales and other dogs have so far been sufficient to protect them from lion attack.

One has only to walk through the herd to realise how suitable this treatment is for these hardy and strongly framed cattle; and the condition, health and contentment that reign amongst them confirm the wisdom of this policy.

It seems certain that all the fine qualities for which this strain has become famous in Australia, are being perpetuated here unimpaired; and the growing dairying industry of Kenya, as it requires reliable bulls, will be able to obtain them from amongst the splendid young stuff growing up here. It is certain that they may be let loose amongst cows in any part of the Colony with a minimum danger of loss from changed environment; and already several satisfactory sales have taken place as a result of herd owners' visits to Curragilla.

The Bulls.

Amongst the five pure-bred bulls used on Curragilla is "Bloodstone," imported son of "Champion Jamie," the best sire in the

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Oakbank (Australia) herd; and, in order to secure a further desirable change of blood, importations of South Africans have been made from Alex. Drysdale's and Price Moore's herds. These include a son of "Hobsland Lord Doit" from the former; and a special scion of the well-known and sought after strain of the latter from his stud farm on the Mooi River, Natal.

Major White owns 900 head of stock; his pure-breds have already produced twenty youngsters and there are 300 half-bred Ayshires.

A ride through this estate satisfies one of its potentialities. With a cool bracing climate and an excellent rainfall, the butter produced from its dairy has already earned a satisfactory reputation under the supervision of Captain Hall.

Two hundred acres were in crop to wheat, flax and barley at the time of my visit; and there is ample scope for a great increase both in stock-running and agriculture on the broad, open down-like areas on the upper part of the farm or amongst the cedar sheltered terraces, rich with succulent grasses, along the valleys that intersect the property. Ensilage pits, and paddocking comprise the main lines of improvement that the owner is following up with a view to increasing revenue and material possibilities; and they seem but the natural corollary to the concrete application of his lifelong experience of pioneering and farming knowledge.

It is indeed greatly to the benefit of Kenya that a proportion of seasoned pioneers has been attracted and induced to throw in its lot with this young colony. Major White is an excellent example of this desirable class, and he radiates a practical atmosphere of Australian capacity, tireless energy and masterful well-directed working power which cannot but be an inspiration to the Home man coming direct to the strange conditions of a temperate, though equatorial country.

For this fine, cheery Queenslander was born and reared in bush country, far remote from civilisation, drier and hotter of climate and materially poorer in potentialities than anything white men have been asked to settle upon in this frequently maligned country. He recalls the time when cattle on his father's station had to be droved 2,000 miles to market and then the survivors only realised £5 per head.

And his view of the difference between the carrying capacity of typical Northern Queensland stock areas, that he knows so intimately, and the class of land given out to our ex-soldiers on Laikipia—in which he is also interested—was graphically brought out in our subsequent trip to Rumuruti. During the drought of last year he ran 600 head of cattle and a considerable number of goats and sheep on 2,500 acres of the latter. Had it been Queensland in similar conditions of aridity, he stated, an equal area would have barely supported about 60 head of horned stock.

(c) Some Description of the of the Road to Rumuruti.

The circumstances that Major White, D.S.O., late A.E.F., was going on to his Laikipia farm from Upper Gilgil gave me the unusual privilege of travelling one of the prettiest and most characteristic pieces of highland country in Kenya through a thoroughly Australian atmosphere. We started at dawn, with a thick mountain mist enveloping everything and almost concealing the five staunch doolie mules that supplied the power to our swift buck-board. But gradually the masterful sun broke down the opaque barrier and freed to view the changing scenery of spacious undulating park-like lands edged by forest on the left-hand and dominated by the great Aberdares, with Ol Bolossat lake at foot, on the right.

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that stormy petrel of East Africa's stock diseases—who had just arrived, on urgent cabled request, to investigate the threatening rinderpest invasion.

Across the river, only a mile or so beyond the township, is the farmstead of Captain Armstrong, an early Kenyan pioneer and one of those kindly experienced, practical settlers who forms a rallying point for inspiration and positive help or useful advice to either newcomers or old friends wherever he may locate himself. Laikipia is fortunate in having attracted such as he.

A Medical Farm.

Next to his property of rich cattle and sheep country a further excursion brought my companion and myself to one of the most interesting developments to be found in Kenya. It is upon one of the medical farms given out as a bonus with the object of attracting doctors to practise amongst up-country settlers. Dr. Cunningham took up this particular property and prepared to treat all those multitudinous diseases that the Home man, often misled by local croakers, implicitly believe are inseparable from life on the Equator.

Here for twelve months or more he waited ready at any moment to deal with, amongst other complaints, beri-beri, sleeping-sickness, malaria, sun-stroke, amoebic dysentery, yellow fever, elephantiasis, hook-worm, trychynosis, appendicitis, or housemaid's knee. And during that entire period the only patient brought to him was suffering from a fracture caused by a fall from a horse. Then it occured to him that he was not in the conventional death-trap painted by those who know not Kenya but in a place of exuberant and overflowing health and vitality.

He himself and his wife after the strenuous years of war work were renewing their youth. Their children were steadily growing browner, stronger, and sturdier. The infinitely varied, natural life around them gave an interest and zest to living and—in the doctor's words—is worth more than years of conventional schooling to his boys. A friend who came out to stay with them, infected with consumption and half a lung atrophied from unhealthy military occupation, recovered completely.

Convinced by this, Dr. Cunningham acted. He had in pre-war times specialised on consumption; and he was now satisfied that one might hunt the whole world through without finding a place where the incipient stages of this disease could be so quickly and effectively banished as on the Laipikia Plateau. It was no use waiting for patients in so healthy a country. They must be brought from less fortunate places.

To-day he is busy erecting roomy, comfortable, separate houses for treating early cases of this disease that he expects to attract to Laikipia in the near future. And on a different part of the farm he is also building a general Convalescent home of airy rooms and chalets for all kinds of non-infectious patients. He has worked out charges on a far more reasonable scale than anything hitherto offered to sick folk in Kenya. He is also busily constructing a golf course, tennis courts and other means of amusement. The theatre for this work of health-restoring is a spacious naturally open 2,000 acre area of the farm that reminds one of a piece of Salisbury Plain.

From it a full length view of mighty Kenya is visible on one side and distant forest ranges on the others. Across it sweep the sweetest, purest, driest, upper airs of heaven; and the strong health-giving, microbe-destroying sun bathes it for nearly twelve hours daily. Neither extremes of winter cold nor oppressive summer heat

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are felt here at this 6,000 ft. level; and the invalid can rest or reasonably exert himself under constant medical supervision in these novel surroundings with a better chance of recovery than anywhere else on earth.

Kenya is distinctly richer for the possession of this doctor who, instead of reviling our climate, has found in it the greatest physical virtues and is pinning his faith to its recuperative and health-giving qualities. Already many specialists of Great Britain are in touch with him and he is arranging to increase his accommodation to suit any influx by the simple plan of ensuring cable notice before patients leave Europe, so that if necessary he can build their separate sleeping houses against their arrival.

(d) How a Gilgil Sheep Ranch was Established and is run.

As I crossed the line to the main Nakuru Road, which only takes four and a half miles and a drop of 500 feet to reach Kekopey, the Hon. Galbraith Cole's estate, two or three wagons loaded with bales of wool from Laikipia were wending their cumbersome way to Gilgil Station. This happy augury of the future—and pleasant reminder of early Australian days when the great ox teams with their cheery, blasphemous drivers brought down to Melbourne the precious harvest of the far-away Wimmera and Riverina flocks—surely indicates the coming solution to the perplexed settlers of the great Plateau. These small consignments of wool are perhaps the first low waves of what may grow into the floodtide of a fleecy river; but of this more anon.

It is agreeable for a change to break away from all the labours and worries of the agriculturalist and seek temporary asylum in the serener atmosphere of pastoral interests.

Kekopey is a straight-out sheep and cattle run. There is no indication either of a plough or ploughed land in any corner of its 30,000 acres. Sweet turf grows up to the very front door steps of the cool commodious brick house; and nutritious couch grass pushes against its four walls, as if anxious to know by what right preference has been accorded to its Kikuyu rival that renders so vividly green the pretty interior courtyard of this pleasant residence.

At the present moment 14,000 sheep are on the detailed and carefully kept books of the estate, and 2,000 cattle. A few thousand head of self-invited zebra, kongoni and impala were also demasturing themselves upon the fairly abundant grasslands at the time of my visit; the first-named specially constituting a problem of primary maguitude to the owner. It is difficult enough without this complication to estimate the true carrying capacity of this rich run; and the subject will remain a debateable one until fencing and sub-division have been carried out thoroughly; but that it is very considerable will be agreed by all who know the property.

Shearing was proceeding at Kekopey at the time of my visit and the Kikuyu workers were, for natives, daily turning out a fair tally of carefully clipped lambs, constituting the last few hundred needing handling this season. That it is worth while giving thorough attention to this operation is clearly demonstrated by the returns which have recently come to hand for wool from this property; for at the June sales in London an average of 14.03 pence per lb. was realised for 98 bales. The highest price this consignment fetched was 18½ pence and as the average weight of the Kekopey fleeces was 5.37 lbs., the

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Wide stretches of rich dairying and general farming country, at present untenanted but capable of close sub-division and settlement, surrounded us for miles until at last we passed over the boundary of the great Gilgil Syndicate's territory and approached the first ex-soldier farms on this route. For two or three miles the fresh spoor of lion, who evidently take kindly to public roads in these parts, marked the softer mud of the track. A busy group of fifty vultures, disturbed by our approach, flapped heavily away from the remains of a newly killed zebra; and once the fresh dung of a rhinoceros caused a momentary sensation amongst our leaders.

Great Waterfall.

So we journeyed on in the bright cool morning, noting the crops and huts of the soldier settlers, watching a few far-off head of game and crossing an occasional bridge until we arrived at Thompson's Falls There while a true Australian billy boiled—Major White will have none of your kettles—we wandered to the point of vantage whence this great flow of water drops perpendicularly down 240 feet into its great gorge, looking for all the world like a long strip of Angora goat skin carpet, in its beautiful setting of green forest, fern clad rocks, and blue sky. The recent heavy rains had doubtless swelled the torrent materially. But it was stated by an authority belonging to the neighbood that even in the driest weather at least 150 million gallons of water flow over these falls every 24 hours.

After an early lunch we passed across the divide between the upland territory, 8,000 feet high, we had travelled since dawn, through a chequered aisle of picturesque forest on to the long downward trail that leads to Rumuruti and 6,000 feet Laikipia.

An exuberant buoyancy about this trip makes one venture the prophecy that some day there will be a local folk-song in these parts with the chorus:—

"We're off to Rumuriti in the morning."

Which reminds me that my visit synchronised with the publication of a very alarming statement in oversea papers condemning this young township as the thirstiest place in the Empire.

Fame is all very fine and every settler desires to see the glories of Kenya well advertised abroad. But there is such a thing as notoriety and the newspaper search for unusual items of interest, doubtless pandered to by some facetious local correspondent, had suddenly brought this suckling of a township we were fast travelling to into the limelight. Both in British and American papers Rumuruti has been held up to derision as a place in which a population of ten Europeans hold eight licences between them. I mentally made a resolution that during my short visit this important subject should be probed to the bottom—without heel-taps—and that no bottle should be left unturned in my search for facts which, by means of the publicity at my disposal might be used to re-establish the virgin reputation of this budding city. Perhaps, like classical Rumtufoo of Bab Ballads, the interests of this community would however be best served by the appointment of a bishop.

Down the long road we rattled through the loveliest of diversified forest, open, and bush lands with the broad strong Uasin Narok from the Falls flowing almost within stone's throw and the twenty dancing hooves in front merrily rushing us into warmer, mellower, climatic conditions that we welcomed after the chilly, upland morning breezes.

Soon we reached true Laikipia scenery consisting of vast stretches

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of somewhat sparse, short pasture, sweet and nutritious in appearance and abundantly sheltered by a variety of single or grouped trees of stunted habit. This is a sheep and cattle area par excellence, and also likely lion country. Indeed there is no game that one should be surprised to run into down here; and both rhino and elephant had been seen within a day or two of our arrival. The whole surroundings became more and more typical of the best Australian pastoral country as we approached Rumuruti; except perhaps for the numerous flowering trees that bordered the brimming stream with its hard, shallow, approachable banks, like an Old Country river, that make it so valuable for watering stock.

Soon after 4 p.m., having completed over 48 miles of all kinds of road, we rolled into the now far-famed township of Rumuruti with a fine thirst upon us and received a hearty welcome from Mr. Rathbone of the Dewdrop Inn. This was the first of the licenced premises to be encountered; but we had promised ourselves a subsequent investigation of the "Pussyfoot Arms" and various other weirdly named places of public bucolic resort that our counsellors had already advised us to visit. But alas, it is only too true that man proposes and God disposes. For it turned out that the town was suffering, in spite of its many licences and small population, from an alcoholic famine. The beer had been finished some days before; and the last bottle of whisky was standing carefully guarded by the barman, on the counter. A short immediate excursion to the nearest competitive place of business proved this disappointing state of affairs to have been correctly portrayed; for we found there two or three disconsolate looking members of the community sitting round a bottle labelled "concentrated ginger beer." In the rustic parlour of the "Dewdrop Inn, two very sober settlers were discussing the outbreak of rinderpest over attenuated glasses of whisky; and—Home papers please copy—neither at my first contact with the inhabitants of this district nor during any subsequent journeying amongst them, did I discover a drunken man or a well-matured alcoholic nose. The whole libellous report about Rumuruti's thirstiness has been grossly exaggerated; and I suspect the Government, in its greed for fresh revenue to be at the bottom of the misunderstanding. Possibly prompted by the Kenyan Geddes Committee the authorities are feeling their way towards a scheme for licensing individual drinkers instead of stationary premises.

Rumuruti is delightfully situated on the Uasin Narok, whose banks here are bordered by vivid green pastures, shady avenues and nooks, and mature gardens that give it restful, English rural appearance of a very attractive character. Most of the tree and flower planting, the visitor gratefully enjoys so much, was the work of Miss Olive Collyer (now of Kabete, one of Kenya's most successful lady settlers) at the time her brother was D.C. in the earlier days of administrative occupation, ten or twelve years ago before the Masai left the district. The permanent beautifying of Rumuruti's central area by this lady is worth placing on record as a piece of altruistic labour that posterity will thankfully remember.

The actual township itself seems to be chaotic, entirely without plan and void, and consists almost entirely of scattered temporary official buildings. The present D.C. Mr. Adams, with charming courtesy showed us round the gardens and entertained us in his pleasant home.

Here we were fortunate enough to meet Major R. E. Montgomery the Veterinary advisor to Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar and Tanganyika

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[illegible] per head amounted to 8lbs. [illegible] Fifty per cent. of these [illegible] were breeding ewes and these alone were shorn in full fleece; the remainder carried only seven months' growth when shorn. With the exception of 127 pure Merino rams all these sheep were grade Merino-native.

A London Report.

In this connection I was privileged to read the London broker's letter and some inspiriting comments therein cannot fail to give encouragement to Kenyan flock-masters. He says: "These British East African wools are getting better known and, under a widening demand, there is more competition from a larger number of buyers. It would be a further inducement to users to buy if they could rely on being able to repeat their purchases; so an increase in production would help the marketing of these wools, as the trade is quite able to absorb all that are grown."

"The great improvement that has taken place since the earlier years, in the get-up and classing, of so many of these clips has very favourably affected the price obtained for such."

"The call just now is all for fine Merino wools and, as compared with pre-war times, prices for these are proportionately far higher than for the coarser, crossbred growths. These latter are now unduly depressed and, but for the huge quantity and being out of fashion, should be selling better."

These remarks speak for themselves, and show what necessity and possibilities exist for increased Kenyan wool production. And settlers possessing sheep land, more especially in North Kenya and North Laikipia have here a definite hint of a practically inexhaustible market and a remunerative line of activity.

The history and present development of the industry on Kekopey afford illuminating and encouraging data for those in suitable country who are at a loss to know what economic enterprise to pursue on their properties. In pre-war days 10d. to 1/- per lb. was the usual return without much fluctuation. During the war the price rose to 15d., then to 25d. and upwards, reaching a maximum of 40d. Now it is, as the above figures show, at a really remunerative figure; and there is no product being grown in Kenya concerning which the authorities who watch market indications for the future have a more cheery tale to tell. This annual income from wool is just the revenue that saves the situation for the pioneer not over-blest with capital.

It is estates such as Kekopey and its even greater sister-run, Lord Delamere's Soysambu, the homestead of which is visible across beautiful lake Elmenteita from the former, that have pioneered this industry to success. Nearly twenty years ago they began at the bottom rung with native ewes, a few imported unacclimatised rams and all the unknown difficulties and diseases of virgin country before them. Pound by pound, generation after generation, they have added to the weight of their fleeces; and simultaneously their quality.

They have fought and conquered wire-worm, heart water, blue tongue and various other complaints and proved that intelligence and unremitting attention can overcome everything, and they have done all these things at a remuneration of almost half the present price of wool. So that the beginner now who picks up a few hundred native ewes, or better still, some grades, if only fifty or a hundred as a nucleus, and pure-bred rams, has the path blazed for him; and the knowledge that he is likely to make a proportionately heavier return on his enterprise than did the original pioneers of the industry.

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The first axiom that the operations on Kekopey have discovered is that sheep cannot safely be treated as a side-show, to be allowed to live or die as Allah wills, but must be given continuous and careful watchfulness. Then they will amply repay the flockmaster. For one thing, the time is not in sight in Kenya—if it ever will be—when day and night herding can be dispensed with; and this fact alone necessitates a greater need of close intelligent supervision than in other sheep countries. The everlasting contact of these animals one with another renders their infection with any passing epidemic more certain and their cure more difficult. Kekopey figures for last year give the death rate at 11.09 per cent., and lambing rate 79.71. In cattle the birth rate was 77.54 and the losses averaged 3.17; 15 being taken by lion. The sheep records, it is ominous to note, show that 161, or over 1 per cent., disappeared during the 12 months, in spite of herding, and have never been accounted for. The former lords of Kenya will have their little joke and exact their toll from the white man.

A thorough tour of this splendid property demonstrates many interesting points in the steady development both of Kekopey itself from a waterless, scrub-covered, vermin infested area to its present stage of improvement and in the methods adopted to care for and grade up the live stock depasturing thereon.

A pipe-line running for 15 miles through the whole country, which is fed by a copious, million-gallon-per-day spring that rises on the estate of Mr. Colvile on the north-west corner, and by whose courtesy it is tapped, now supplies ample quantities of the essential element, through the medium of galvanised or cement tanks and long troughs, at every mile or two through the estate. Eight of these are in operation and the system reaches from one end of Kekopey to the other.

The lambing ewes are maintained in manageable well selected flocks of 1,500 each. Except when running with the ewes the rams are kept in a flock by themselves; and it is a policy of the management to sell off these valuable imported animals, while still in their prime, after about three years' service.

A fine series of picked high grade locally bred rams are also turned out every year, thereby giving a chance to beginners to get hold of breeding stock at reasonable prices. Kekopey comprises a series of short, isolated escarpments, forming part of the north side of the Rift Valley, intersected by broad, richly grassed terraces, which generally take the form of sheltered, shallow valleys, falling gradually to the soda lake, Elmenteita. The nutritious deeply rooted couch grass peculiar to this part of Kenya is everywhere. Some sections of the estate are fairly heavily bushed with lelishwa — the vaal of South Africa which gave the name to the river after which the Transvaal is named. The escarpments are clad in bigger bush and timber; amongst which cedar is plentiful.

Rains have been below the average—which is 24 inches—during the last couple of years at Kekopey; for the estate lies in a dry belt. Nevertheless on normal years it is usual for the grass to attain a height of 3 or 4 feet and to provide fodder in abundance for all the stock on the run.

Scenery.

The beauty, picturesqueness and variety of the area is unusual, even in a country noted for its fine scenery. The green dressed escarpments to the east, the series of peaceful sheltered valleys and flats comprising its main body, and the conical shaped, bush-covered extinct volcanoes with that gem of a

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Elmenteita, on its western boundary, combine to give it a distinction that places it far above the average estate. In the near distance lie the open plains of Soysambu, and the immense shapeless bulk of steam-riddled Eburru; while the background is filled from south to north with the great western wall of the Rift Valley, the Mau escarpment.

The morning after my arrival I awoke when the first twilight of the coming day was beginning to show and night's sombre shadows slowly vanishing. From my window I saw emerge one by one the wierd, rugged and vast shapes of these mighty hills; as the encircling gicom and clinging mists were gradually disentangled from them and the slate-coloured lake a mile below the house. Even stern Caledonia in all its wildness could show nothing grander.

Sheep will always be the leading line on Kekopey; but the cattle are nevertheless distinctly good and and show in their appearance the favourable nature of the environment for this species of domesticated stock. The main policy adopted in respect to these is to breed first-cross stock for sale from the best pure-bred shorthorn bulls obtainable and good native cows.

One cannot wonder at the determination of the owner and creator of this beautiful estate, on which he has made his permanent home, to refuse to even consider the question of a possible sale. A certain amount of trimming may yet be necessary to completely round off the property; and in doing this a fine 2,500 acres block on its extreme north-western or Nakuru end, that would make a first-class dairy farm, may, with it share of lake frontage, be sold off. But the bulk of Kekopey with its expensive and efficient water-supply system will remain intact and, let us hope, a heritage in the family of its pioneer, for many generations.

(e) The Farm that sits on the Safety Valve of the Rift Valley.

By lack of sufficient forethought, my descent at Eburru station (between Gilgil and Elmenteita) took place the one night of the week on which the train discharged what passengers it may have for this quiet spot, just after sunset. Instead, therefore, of a pleasant ride in daylight through the passes and up the continuous rises of this great rugged and somewhat uncanny mountain that lead to the homestead 2,000 ft. above the railway line, I found myself adventuring forth on a strange but powerful steed into a blackness which the light carried by my guide, who led the way, rendered all the more impenetrable.

The strongest gale I have ever experienced in Kenya was blowing up the Rift Valley and pressing its shoulders against the contours of this vast volcanic obstruction lying athwart it. And when for the third time I grovelled on the ground behind a tussock to light the hurricane lamp, extinguished by the high wind on some wild hill-side, my nerves were hardly soothed by my Kikuyu companion who, breaking silence for the first time, shouted tersely in my ear that his bwana had shot a lion on the same spot only the previous evening.

For hours we seemed to plod onwards in that Cimmerian night with its eerie feeling of unknown, though perhaps more or less imaginary dangers, due to the existence of unlocatable hot springs, whose steams I had often observed from passing trains, and wild animals. But a great star high up on the horizon, which for a long time I took to be the welcoming light of the homestead of "Distilled Waters," as the owner whimsically names his farm, cheered and led us on until at last the sound of hospitable voices encouraged our mounts to a quickened

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pure and I was soon warming my chilled hands by a bright fireside.

Next morning the memories of that couple of hours' journey through the menacing shadows seemed faint and far away in the sparkling sunshine; and I gazed with an interest almost amounting to incredulity down the innocent looking winding path in its pleasant verdant setting of hill, dale and mountain slope. So far, at least, Eburru was not living up to its reputation for I had not come across one hot spring, and the country round the homestead, instead of being the mass of lava, scoria and pumice one judges it to be from the line, was good, sound agricultural or natural pastoral land, very similar to the healthy Gilgil uplands I had recently visited.

The Steam Jets.

While strolling round an excellently cared for garden full of roses, lilies, chrysanthemums and many other choice flowers, I chanced upon a spurt of mist arising out of the ground which a stranger might well be forgiven for hastily concluding was one of Eburru's famous steam jets. Closer inspection proved it however to be only an ordinary garden water spray, under whose beneficent attention violets as big as pansies were growing. But I was getting nearer to my search; for this very sprinkler was fed from the condensed water of steam naturally exuding from a hill side, well above the level of the homestead which it supplies.

From the garden is visible a series of gigantic pipes at the spot where the vapour issues that reminds one of the mechanical age which H. G. Wells loves to portray in his novels. A careful examination of this curious phenomenon later in the day shewed clearly the ingenious manner in which Nature has provided for the water needs of an otherwise arid country. But it required a settler of an imaginative yet practical, inventive and mechanical turn of mind to take advantage of the possibilities that condensation offers here, and develop the previously unheard-of profession of cloud mining. The appliances of Mr. Harvey are simple in the extreme.

The steam vent in the rotten red earth is opened up as far as possible and capped with a receptacle like a big still that leads the vapour into 15-inch diameter galvanised piping, in some cases a hundred feet long and over. Here the steam, which is terribly scalding at its source, condenses and runs away in small pipes, a beautifully pure, crystal-clear liquid. At the present time 8,000 to 9,000 gallons per day are condensed at Eburru from the half-dozen steam jets so harnessed; a quantity that supplies all the requirements of this big estate. But there is ample scope for more; for within the radius of these mysterious cloud emanations one has only to kick the soil or stick in a crowbar and new outlets are created. The steam itself seems inexhaustible.

Like many others I had formed my previous impression of Eburru from outside appearances. And wherever, from its neighbouring country or heights, a view of this mighty forbidding looking mountain, that straddles the Rift Valley—which must be close on thirty miles broad here—and with its auxiliary ridges nearly spans it, my interest in its features has never failed to be aroused. But the external impression of sterility and ruggedness, accentuated into a feeling almost amounting to repulsion by the sight of steam jets arising from several places, is entirely dissipated during a visit to its interior expanses.

Large areas of cultivable land, never suspected from the exterior, exist. One finds that the kernel of this vast property is sound, solid and fertile as the eternal hills of Upper Gilgil or the Mau. Between the volcanic crust of hills, whence come most of the steam jets, a

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[illegible] sheltered valleys suitable for maize, flax, wheat and other economic crops occur. The rainfall is good and a flax mill is kept busy all the time dealing with the stocks of excellently dew-retted straw from previous harvests. The Irish expert who supervises the work and turns the raw product into soft lustrous hanks of fibre, speaks glowingly of the quality of this crop on Eburru.

During a pleasant ride round the estate I came across area after area of arable; the largest consisting of a block that will give a continuous 1,000 acres when it has been broken up. On one portion of the property a big plough, operated by simple [illegible] strength, was engaged in turning over new land, together with lelishwa scrub and everything else that came in its way; and the native squatters' crops of short but well-cobbed maize near by were a pleasant surprise at an elevation certainly not less than 8,000 ft.

The crest of a high hill (9,000 ft.) on the property that dominates the mountain and the Rift Valley is a permanent trigonometrical station. On one side of it are found, in picturesque, picnic-inviting country, the sulphur steam jets to which Mr. Harvey is paying increasing attention as their medical qualities are successfully experimented with. There can be no mistaking the sulphuretted hydrogen odour, though fortunately very attenuated, that one meets when near these places; which are higher up and quite distinct from the pure steam outbursts. Alum also must enter into the composition of this steam, as a taste of the deposit on the soil where it escapes testifies.

Valuable Qualities.

That these medicinal vapour emanations are being proved to possess valuable healing qualities is borne out by the case of a rheumatic sufferer from the Uasin Gishu. The patient arrived an almost helpless cripple and had to be carried up to the sulphur jet chosen for him. There he camped for a fortnight, submitting himself, as often and as long as he could endure it, to vapour conducted to a rough chamber far enough away to ensure a bearable warmth and discharged into an impervious envelope, within which the sick man sat. He returned to his home entirely cured after this treatment and has had no recrudescence of the complaint since.

On the far side of the estate from Eburru station is Lake Naivasha and the private motor road to the township. Here one obtains an almost overhead bird's-eye view of the shimmering sheet of water and pretty Crescent Isle 2,000 ft. below, that is without rival for distinctness and beauty. All three lakes—(Nakuru, Elmenteita and Naivasha) may be seen from the property. But it is the Naivasha panorama that surpasses all other views and an admirable site, taking advantage of this feature, has been chosen here by Mr. Harvey for a house. But Eburru is full of nice home sites; many of them near enough to steam springs to have the morning tea and eggs boiled without firewood, and certainly to hatch out clutches of chickens in Nature's incubator by choosing the necessary temperature at the edge of the naturally heated spots.

The owner has built a number of concrete tanks for the reception of distilled water; and his cattle, natives and sheep are all supplied from these or from taps attached to the inflow pipes. He is proposing to build houses and rent one or two ready-made farms with these extraordinary facilities, including an area of ploughed land and ample grazing land for a herd of cattle. These farms, he believes, will suit newcomers who want temporary accommodation before settling down somewhere in Kenya.

Sixty acres of flax and wheat near the homestead were under crop, much of it looking well at the time

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of my visit. An interesting phenomenon here was the second growth, from the old roots of last season's harvest, of both barley and peas; surely a rare event with these strict annuals even in the wonderful climate and soil of Kenya.

Down near Eburru station and between several of the hills are stretches of first-class sheep country; but the Friesland grade herd, one of the earliest to be created in Kenya with pure-bred imported and Government farm bulls, is the chief feature of Eburru's livestock. Many of the cows are quite mature and their milk yield, condition and general thriftiness prove the herd to be of very high value and the pasture eminently suited to this type of stock.

The potentialities of this estate are very considerable and remarkable; and the country owes homage to the pioneer who took over this 8,000-acre block of waterless land when none would look at it, and has created the present highly developed property. With a delicate wife, Mr. Harvey came up from South, suffering from overwork and ill-health after the Boer war, in the winding up of which he was officially engaged. These two, simultaneously with their strenuous development labour, have brought up a fine family of young Kenyans, two sons now assisting on the farm. To-day both Mr. and Mrs. Harvey are vigorous, robust people, more in love with the country that has cured them, and with their unique estate, "Distilled Water," than ever. They are the stuff that Britain's great pioneers have always been made of; and Kenya would be distinctly the poorer had some mischance led them elsewhere; or misfortune, which might easily have upset their by no means great initial capital, prevented them from completing what is, in reality, a very fine life work.

The system of handling natives, both employees and squatters, in vogue on this estate, is unusual and worthy of comment. Quite a number of Kikuyu live on Eburru; but instead of wasting valuable European time in adjudicating on any question of petty justice or misunderstanding that may crop up—and they are legion—everything of a debateable nature between the owner and his workers is delegated to a Kiama or native court of old men. These, as is the native custom, delight in their task, for all mature natives seem to be bush-lawyers, and thrash out every case very thoroughly. They then confer with the owner on their findings and what the verdict should be. Nothing could work more smoothly; and it is found that where even a small chastisement may be resented from the whiteman, the severest penalties of the Kiama are accepted with good grace and an entire absence of subsequent ill-feeling.

(f) A Mountain Farm, its Developments Crops and Pets.

To reach Melangini, the estate of Colonel Stanley Paterson, C.B.E., on the northernmost heights of Gilgil, it is necessary to ride steadily upwards for 22 miles from the station. The first ten or twelve miles contain, however, the major portion of the rise from 6,500 to 9,000 feet and pass through much broken picturesque country, interspersed with broad, sloping pastures, some of which give promise of arable and all of grazing possibilities. Farm and factory No. 1 of the Gilgil Syndicate straddle the road half-way to Melangini. Thanks to a thunderstorm that turned the track into a rivulet in places and rendered the soil soft and sticky, the ascent thus far was a gruelling one for man and beast; and it was with relief that, after a refreshing rest, I turned along the more level and less used road that undulates through the whole length of the Ololoobar river valley, culminating close to the great mountain upon which Colonel Paterson has made his home.

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spacious vistas of rolling grass in bold undulations, edged abrupt wooded cliffs and bluffs on this track bring to the memory the fringe of Sussex chalk downs or the Mendip Hills in Somersetshire as approached from the Cheddar side in late spring. Rain being over the air was fresh and sunny; and the scattered, comfortable-looking homesteads in their setting of evergreen forest and pasture, with their crops, neat flax sheds and outbuildings, lent an atmosphere of prosperous occupation to the pleasant landscape reminiscent of some well-settled New Zealand dairying or sheep-fattening country.

These scenes, combined with the bright blue, cloud-flecked sky, the heavy mist still crowning Kipipiri and the Aberdares, and many a wild flower in the emerald grass along my path—amongst which I noted the yellow bloom of an indigenous thistle—all assisted to break the monotony of the long journey. At last a steeper grade upwards in the road ran me into scattered bush and bamboo country; and the end came just as I was wondering whether the track would lead me on for ever. Great minds often think alike and and this apprehension seemed simultaneously to disturb my mule which shied and propped uneasily as if the odour of imminent wild animals and the fear of the wild had begun to weigh upon its soul.

Suddenly the path swung round a corner and changed in to the mud-trampled condition only to be found near cattle bomas. A minute or two later the welcome verandah of Colonel Paterson's bungalow half hidden by feathery bamboo came into sight. Then, like the raising of some green tinted curtain at the commencement of a vivid theatrical landscape scene, the great view I had been skirting for the last hour with only an occasional glimpse of what was to come burst into full sight. Not for nothing had I been emulating during many pleasant hours the worthy young man in Longfellow's Excelsior; for Sapukolooltian—as the Masai long since named this lofty hill—is one of those choice spots from which one might, if it were at all humanly possible, view all the kingdoms of the earth in a moment of time.

At my toes the land fell steeply away to a broad undulating tableland only a few hundred feet below on which a snug homestead and farm — belonging to an ex-guardsman, Mr. Milton, and one of Kenya's most practical and successful settlers—spread out invitingly. Beyond a hidden escarpment the blue haze of distance begins to gather for the next portion of solid earth to meet the eye lies thousands of feet below and many miles away. Comparatively close by snuggles lake Elmenteita, a mere five miles off as the crow flies, and 3,000 feet nearer sea-level. To left and right her sister lakes, Naivasha and Nakuru, shimmer in the intermediate distance, each with their incipient city at foot; flanked respectively by their attendant volcanoes, sprightly Longonot and the squat, yawning, darksome-mouthed Menengai crater. Behind these stands the Mau, the great western wall of the Rift Valley, which lifts its continuous coping to an elevation at least level with Sapukolooltian. Over to the right lies Eldama Ravine in the body-ground backed by the Uasin Gishu Plateau; and the high Nandi country that overlooks Victoria Nyanza.

On a clear day at the back of these again lifting its head over all else into the empyrean blue is sometimes seen a wonderful snow-clad peak—none other than Elgon on the Uganda border. Fascinating and awe-inspiring in its various moods during the day, by night this view possesses the weird charm of an infinite spaciousness that can be felt but not seen. Imagination then plays powerfully a leading part, especially when the last light flickers

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out in far-away Nakuru and leaves one eerily alone staring at the massed darkness below and the nearby, naked stars above. Later on I found that a five minutes' walk takes one to a position at back of the house whence Mount Kenia, the Aberdares, Kipipiri and the broad expanse of Laikipia may be scanned, over the neighbouring farmsteads belonging to Messrs. Swift and Rutherford and Lt.-Commander Barradell, R.N.

Congenial Environment.

But Melangini is after all a farm, not a world's showstand; and having chanced to visit this property some years ago, only a few weeks in fact before Colonel Paterson first took it over, my interest in the practical plane of development soon outweighed the spectacular attractions. On every side material changes are in evidence. The proximity of the bamboo forest, that valuable source of building material, has facilitated the erection of a solid bungalow, reinforced by a strong stone fireplace, round the welcome blaze of which host, hostess, and guest gladly assemble at eventide.

And it is difficult to imagine a more congenial environment for those whose interests in world politics and Imperial affairs are undimmed by life's vicissitudes. For the reminiscences of this widely experienced officer of the British Army, who after 48 years of continuous service has now, when well over sixty, turned farmer and pioneer, slide north and south, from Scotland's Secret Service during the German War to Capetown in days when the whole of Africa did not contain 80 miles of railroad; or east and west from Venezuela, as it impressed an orchid hunter on six months' leave from military duties, to China during the Boxer rebellion.

Hale, energetic and successful in his new role, and delighting in peaceful construction after a lifetime of war, this ex-Army pioneer can put to shame many a younger man who exchanges the precious savour of accomplished deeds and solid pioneering endeavour for the futile amusements of cities or mere idle land-owning. But he and Mrs. Paterson still maintain their London house and are looking forward to the time in the near future when they can so arrange their affairs in Kenya as to be able to spend a portion of each year amongst their Old Country friends.

Already flax in quite considerable quantities is grown and retted at Melangini; the scutching being attended to at Mr. Crawford's neighbouring mill. Wheat, barley and oats of excellent quality have been produced and promising fields of these grains (as well as experimental plots of freshly imported varieties) were coming up at the time of my visit. The frequent rains at this elevation prohibit aridity; and indeed the chief fear of loss arises from an excess of moisture.

In addition to this Colonel Paterson is making a determined bid to capture a portion of Kenya's onion trade and reduce the scandal of substantial money exports to India or elsewhere for a product that he is confident can be adequately grown locally. So successful have his efforts been in this direction on his rich forest soil during the last two years that he is contemplating putting twenty acres under this crop.

He has already earned tentatively the title of Kenya's Onion King; and a steady business is done, with growers less fortunately situated, in sturdy young plants. Hitherto a serious difficulty has been the gigantic size to which his onions grow; and it is said that some storekeepers, in despair of selling them whole, have placed them singly on a tray and offered to cut off a pound or two for retail purchasers, as if dealing with cheese.

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Stock is this land-owner's chief pleasure and a very presentable herd of Shorthorn grade and native milkers have been gathered together for so short a period of occupation. Pigs—in spite of the low prices now being given—pay a small profit on this estate, thanks to home-grown barley, the waste products of the dairy and the utilisation of refuse from the flax deseeding machine, in which a material proportion of defective linseed inevitably remains.

A tramp round the property satisfies the visitor as to the diversity of soils and their resulting potentialities; of the fine area of pasture—with always the bamboo top—like a natural ensilage—to fall back on in times of scarcity for the dairy herd; and of the ample supply of running water from springs and mountain streams. High up though the farm is and subject to frequent light frost, the health of everybody and everything in this neighbourhood seems notably good; and robustness, the natural habit of both exotic and indigenous life.

The Lady's Part.

A remarkable feature of Melangini is the terracing and flower beds in front of the house, a task that Mrs. Paterson has made entirely her own, with an activity and capacity surprising in one presumably not accustomed to manual work or heavy constructive effort. With the help of only two native youngsters this lady has planned and carried out a very ambitious scheme of ornamental gardening, involving the shifting of hundreds of tons of soil.

Though not yet completed one is to-day able to enjoy the results of this continuous labour, for the two long terraces, one below the other, are carpeted with lawn grass and bordered on both sides with a luxuriant growth of the choicest flowers, arranged in attractive colour schemes. Mrs Paterson's participation in this enterprise is very real; for she works steadily at it with her own hands throughout the long day and has planted every flower and shrub herself. Most of these blooms are produced in Mrs. Paterson's nursery, upon which a continually increasing demand is being made by Kenyan garden-makers, as it gets better known, and only Sutton's seeds are used. Amongst the flowers I noticed in beds, singly and groups, were pink and white antirrhinums; Arum lilies 4 feet high; 22 varieties of climbing roses; carnations, royal blue cinaria, moonflowers, sweet williams, irises, Parma and Neapolitan violets, pansies and 72 varieties of bush roses.

As well as a bewildering selection of seeds germinating or ready to plant out, the nursery contained a profusion of bulbs including narcissus, tulips, agapanthus, yellow arum and Australian climbing lilies etc. A number of local ferns and orchids have also been collected. Honeysuckle grows luxuriantly round the house, on adjacent cedar trees and other supports.

The pets of the house are some native canaries and a curiously human personality in the shape of a female Colobus monkey said to be worth £600 if safely landed at London Zoo. The latter was reared practically from birth by artificial means; her chief food in the early stages of life being bacon fat! To-day she is a well-grown, perfectly harmless, domesticated animal who takes herself seriously as a member of the family, sits at table, with moderate sedateness, on her chair at meal-times, and joins in any indication of laughter with a high-pitch cackling smile of her own.

This species of Simian does not seem to possess the irritating mischievousness of its commoner relatives, though it will take food and does some little damage to the garden. The lady colobus of Colonel and Mrs. Paterson exhibits an

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tonic affection for those human beings she takes a fancy to. She is a judge of character and her favourable verdict on a stranger is generally regarded as a pretty sure test of sterling qualities and intrinsic worth. I am supremely proud of the fact that she recognised these attributes in the highest tense in my person at our first meeting and formed a correspondingly strong attachment for me.

This phrase may be read literally; for she shows her affection by jumping on the back of one's neck, snuggling down against it like some old man of the sea, and going to sleep with the arms and upper part of her body on the top of one's head. Once one has become used to the shock of the sudden assault, either from the ground or an hanging point of vantage, insep able from seizing this strategic position she is no further trouble and one gets used to wearing her as a becoming species of headgear that would doubtless create quite a furore in Paris. During my stay at Melangini, I regret to have to record this attractive little creature raided the onion beds, eating the odoriferous and succulent tuber in quantities quite unsuited to ladies coming in close contact with men friends. Thereby rendering her near presence at times undesirable and her favourite position upon one's person intolerable, nothwithstanding her vigorous objection to desert a post that advertises so flatteringly and unequivocally the strength and permanence of her attachment.

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CHAPTER IV.

NAKURU.

The Leading General Agricultural Centre of East Africa.

The leading physical characteristics of Nakuru district are so diversified that the latter might well be described as a pocket edition of the vaster Kenya of which, agriculturally speaking, it forms the hub.

One hundred and twenty miles from Nairobi by train, the township itself, which is also an important centre of railway activities—and more than ever so now the new Uasin Gishu line is being built—is situated midway between beautiful lake Nakuru and the extinct Menengai volcano, one of old Mother Earth's most tremendous cicatrices. This picturesque yet sinister crater is concealed from the town by an innocent-looking hill. But if one has energy enough to climb to its edge a panorama comprising 75,000 acres of landscape more like an area of the moon than any earthly scene is the reward. Fortunately peace reigns here to-day. With the exception of a few steam jets there are no activities to remind one of the times, in ages past, when this colossal volcano plastered the surrounding countryside with the rich mud and ash that now comprise its productive soil.

" For deep within the mountain's burning breast

" Enceladus the giant is at rest"

The lake, which is tinctured with alkali and embowered amongst lofty hills, vies with that of its somewhat bigger neighbour, Nalvasha, for the loveliness of its many aspects. Though, possibly from the chemical that permeates its contents, it is more inclined to shine modesty as a disc of dull silver than to put on the varied empyrean tints of other expanses of water.

No fresh water creatures live in it; yet it is just possible that somewhere on the earth's surface, notably in America where alkali lakes abound, are fish able to thrive in the rather nauseous admixture. But the town is still too young and too much occupied with the labours of its present pioneering phase to pay much attention to the potentialities for pleasure-giving, or even food, that this fine sheet of water possesses.

On the other or far side from the township are the upward reaching barriers of the Mau Escarpment, comprising broad well watered areas, 10,000 ft. high in places, of very temperate fertile country that one optimistic settler, who hopes to grow wheat permanently up there, has named the Promised Land. On the south side of the lake, before the actual rising land begins, is some of the richest grazing country in Africa. And at a pic-nic on this shore which I was privileged to attend, herds of waterbuck running into hundreds—a very rare occurrence with an animal that usually is found only in twos and threes—as well as many varieties of other game, from Thomson's Gazelle to lake hippo appeared composedly browsing around us.

East of Nakuru one gradually works out of mixed-farming country

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suited for cattle, combined with dairying and maize, and approaches, in the direction of Elmenteita, the characteristic merino sheep and rich, fattening pastoral land of the Rift Valley. Quite possibly the day will arrive when wheat and barley growing will become a beneficial alternative, even in the driest sections here; as it is in the Mallee of Australia which it surpasses for richness in every respect.

To the west of the principal centre, beyond the junction of the new railway, the country rises and flax becomes the main crop right up to the 7,000-ft. altitude of Njoro fourteen miles away, maize or wheat being the alternatives. Here are situated the Unga Flour Mills; up till the present time a stimulating and championing power in the interests of production, of beneficial inspiration to the wheat-grower, whose main market in Kenya they also provide. Wheat is grown extensively at Njoro, which is the main local source of this now acclimatised grain. Years of labour and considerable sums of money have been spent here in attaining a position of some security in this crop. To-day, most of Kenya's seed wheat is produced here and the future of this premier whiteman's food grain appears to be assured.

Great Maize Areas.

North of Nakuru a road, running to the right of Menangai, leads to the Solai valley, after passing through miles of rich cattle and maize-growing land nearer to the town. Ten or twelve miles out one strikes a well watered fat grain and stock country where coffee is also doing surprisingly well. It is estimated that along this route over 15,000 acres of maize are under crop this season; and this is but a tithe of what the land can produce. Beyond Lake Solai one breaks into rising forest land of undoubted beauty and fertility, but except in small patches more broken and difficult to farm than the broad, undulating areas preceding it. To the right, timbered escarpment after timbered escarpment leads one upwards until Sapukolooltian, the mountain with a world's view, is reached at 9,000 ft. Some of the finest and easiest farmed lands in East Africa lie beyond Menengai in great stretches of deep loose loamy soil, enabling thousands of acres at a time to be sown, cultivated and harvested with a maximum of rapidity and success.

To the left of Menengai another main road reaches out to the famous maize growing district known as the Rongai Valley and Lower Molo country. Here the altitude gradually lessens and the rainfall slightly decreases, until one reaches an area between 4,000 and 5,000-ft. elevation only that has now been successfully proved for sisal. The season's estimate of maize planted down this road is approximately 20,000 acres. Branching off to the left from this district again one arrives at Eldama Ravine, amongst the hills leading to the Uashin Gishu plateau, a pleasant fertile country on the way to Eldoret, whence maize in large quantities, dairy produce and many other products will eventually swell Nakuru's general output.

It is curious to note that for a mile or two immediately round Nakuru township itself the grass, though luxuriant, is not first-class pasture in spite of appearances and cattle will not fatten on it as they do further afield. None know the exact cause for this, but the defect is often ascribed to the influence of chemicals discharged at some time or other by Menengai or the absence of some essential in the volcanic soil. It may, however, be entirely a matter, as others aver, of need for close feeding down or breaking up and sweetening.

But if the varied physical conditions of the Nakuru district are all conducive to comparatively easy wealth creation, as they have been doubtless for many thousands of

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The materialising factors that rapidly—in a mere decade or two—transmitting them into signal human prosperity and financial well-being should at least be given ample recognition.

It is something of importance to any man, looking for a place in which to settle and expend his life energies, to find himself amongst people who are, in addition to being hospitable and sociable, diligent in their business, proud of their pioneering occupations and intelligent in adapting the best proved methods of industrial combination.

Co-operation.

Nakuru has given a splendid lead to Kenya in genuine co-operation; and though in this infant province's earlier struggles many mistakes were doubtless made, much was also learnt from them. To-day the organisation known throughout Kenya as the B.E.A. Farmers' Association, Nakuru, which grew out of a former local society of maize growers, is the commercial soul of the countryside. This corporate body represents 90 per cent. of the maize farmers from Nakuru to Fort Ternan. It has nearly £6,000 cash capital and a reserve fund exceeding £1,500. Its liabilities are nil, for it is primarily a produce selling machine for its members. Indenting has become however part of its business to-day because the directors hold the view that production with the greatest economy is the motto of the times. An export trade in maize has been successfully initiated this year. The business of this concern is growing enormously and it is now expecting to handle the biggest crop on record in Kenya.

The newly granted flat rate for export maize travelling by the Uganda Railway to the coast has given throughout Kenya a most desirable fillip to the maize industry, the future of which is now, humanly speaking, assured. A very low estimate fixes 200,000 acres as the area of land near enough to the Kenyan Railways and suited in every way for growing this crop; and something like an average approaching 2,000,000 bags annually may be in consequence expected in due course from this area when it is in full cultivation.

Facilities such as the B.E.A. Farmers' Association have developed for handling this staple product assist materially in creating good farmers. Men become keener and work better through it's ministrations. They can make a good living off less land, thereby increasing the demand for smaller areas, when they are able to rely upon the agency that attends to the marketing end of their job. But this organisation is only at the beginning of its usefulness. It has powers to do anything; and its energetic management at any rate mean to do something more than just sell maize. At the present time, they are arranging to put up their own godown in Nakuru. They have called for tenders; and there can be little doubt that whatever future developments this great district has before it—and they are many—the wide-awake B.E.A. Farmers' Association, with its extensive membership reaching almost to Lake Victoria, is going to take a leading and beneficial part in promoting them.

In serious truth there are few places in the world with a greater variety of proved products than this one; or with more splendid natural endowments for cheap and intense cultivation. Illimitable undeveloped resources exist here; and only markets are wanted to make it a paradise for the small man. Land at the present time is fetching from £2 to £5 per acre in this district and though the water difficulty affects some areas, necessitating attention to and expense in dam building or well sinking, the rainfall is excellent; far exceeding indeed many old settled Australian areas where running streams are

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practically unknown and everyone is dependent on what rain they can catch. Away up in the hills where springs are numerous the main difficulty is transport; but with steady attention to road construction this trouble may be minimised.

Institutions.

Nakuru district, besides all its natural advantages and the commercial benefits bestowed upon its inhabitants by its Farmers' Association, is concentrating upon supplying those public institutions which mean so much in the attractiveness of a new country, to the more desirable and permanent types of settlers. In addition to two churches, two banks, a splendid roomy hotel close to the station, and the Masonic Lodge, a new hospital has been built and endowed as a war memorial. The State School is a model institution standing with its spacious well-ventilated classrooms and dormitories in its own grounds of nearly a hundred acres, about a mile and a half out of the town. There, in different wings and under the healthiest conditions, both boys and girls from farms for a hundred miles round, are boarded at moderate expense, while local children are chiefly day scholars.

In the headmaster and mistress the Education department fortunately possesses leaders and controllers of this institution with whom any parents might be glad to entrust their children; and if interested persons have any misgivings either on this point or about the physical or mental qualities of young Kenyans, they should do as the writer did: go through the school, examine their work and then watch the fine sturdy well grown youngsters at their play outside. Personally I was delighted to find that the plan has been initiated of encouraging boarders to show a practical interest in the Colony's primary industries by working and beautifying a small plot of land themselves. As in Australia and America the children have taken to the idea with enthusiasm; and they are all the better for this little excursion into the realm of well-directed constructive effort; even though half an hour a day of more or less objectless play be the sacrifice entailed. A stroll through the plots, with their pretty designs and incipient attempts at miniature landscape-gardening, prove, however, this departure to be regarded as sport, or a labour of love, rather than a sacrifice.

(b) A Wheat Country par excellence and its Flour Mills.

So fertile is the soil in the Nakuru district and so suitable the climate for European plants that record-breaking feats in horticulture should be plentiful. Everyone has heard of the Jersey cabbages, out of the trunks of which walking sticks are made to sell to astonished holiday makers. But Nakuru can cap this; for on a previous visit I was shown a photograph of a resident taking his ease under the shelter, not of his own vine and fig-tree—which ought easily to be the case in coming years—but of a radish (or was it a turnip?) which he had sown in his garden and forgotten to eat when young. Surely it must have been in some favoured spot such as this that Jack found his magic bean stalk!

Through the pleasant township in which this phenomenon occurred I made my way in an easterly direction alongside the Line to Njoro 14 miles away.

Once well beyond urban influences maize cultivation begins; while here and there flax growers are diligently pursuing success at this, of late, much criticised crop. The latter has seen the worst of the serious depression that overwhelmed it after the war; and, though it may never soar to fancy

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Again, it at least promises to be a sure money maker for the careful husbandman.

A continuous rise has to be negotiated to reach the 7,000 feet elevation of Njoro; a great, spacious, cool and fertile country of open grass-lands, except where exotic plantations of wattle and gum have been placed, with distant vistas of mountain, forest, escarpment and several hundred square miles of the lower lying areas of the Molo valley. Here, close to the line, are the Unga Mills whence comes most of Kenya's local flour. It is impossible not to overhear spasmodic arguments concerning this product as one moves about the Colony. I will not say it is a burning question—for that might quite easily be misconstrued as a reflection on the cooking I have been privileged to enjoy in some of the hospitable homes which, during my pilgrimages, have so kindly received me. But there is certainly a continuous struggle at present going on between prejudices, backed by vested interests in the Bombay flour trade, and those who patriotically favour the consumption of local foodstuffs.

It strikes one as curious that the Swahili translation for *flour* should be a word so closely resembling the English expression that denotes an absence of this necessary of life. When hunger and unga meet some form of complete chemical combination ought normally to occur annihilating to both; or at least there should be purposeful action; even as when Greek meets Greek one pre-supposes a tug-of-war. But much as one would like to do so there is no space here to philosophise at length on the numerous strange word co-incidences—of which this is one—that are to be found in our quaint East-African language. It is perhaps permissible however, to point out that they exist. Some Sherlock Holmes might well devote attention to them. He may be awarded by tracing their origin back to one or more shipwrecked mariners in some previous century. One can picture the pathetic scene on the coast, of a starving sailor pointing to a basket of native meal with one hand what time he rubs his "little Mary" with the other and, in insinuating tones murmurs "hunger" with those varying forms of pronunciation which it is the common belief amongst uneducated people render English understandable in an alien tongue. To continue my thesis a moment more, surely the word "my eye" for egg shows traces of some fugitive politician's advent at Mombasa in the nineteenth century from hustings where the shooting was too good for him; and may partly account for the confirmed tendency to participate in State affairs shown by many Kenya Settlers.

A friend of mine has recently drawn my attention to the probability that some of our ubiquitous Scotsmen were connected with the stirring by-gone times that originated Swahili; because he has come across so many pensive natives who, when asked sympathetically for their names, have given him to understand that they belong to the clan "Mac Anjwa"—clearly a corruption, from some unpronounceable Gaelic title; while up Lumbwa way the Rabs are innumerable. But I must apologise for this digression into the fascinating realm of scientific etymology and return to the mills of Unga Ltd., which it had been my desire for some time to visit.

The importance of this enterprise to Kenya cannot be over-estimated in the present struggling stage of Kenya's affairs. For it practically carries on its shoulders the entire wheat industry and its prosperity spells financial success or failure to a growing number of settlers. The conservation of much local

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revenue within the Colony also depends upon its efforts.

Yet in spite of the beneficial role this food factory is playing one learns with regret that it is still an unremunerative enterprise for its promoters; but for the stringent economy, business skill and the continuous exertions of Mr. Constantine, its energetic manager, it might easily have followed the lead of many other promising industries in Kenya and closed down during the recent depression.

To-day its affairs are on the upgrade. These mills are now supplying nearly one half of the local European demand for flour; and a steadily increasing quantity is being taken by the Indian trade and Uganda. An interesting commentary on local patriotism is given by the information that the Uasin Gishu now only uses Kenyan flour; and though the settlers up there have their own local mill Mr. Constantine was unaffectedly glad to be able to chronicle this.

The capture of the local market will be a fine achievement for the colony's millers, amongst whom Unga Ltd., stands pre-eminent. For it means a disbursement of £70,000 to the wheat grower here; a sum Kenyan settlers can well do with. Last year's harvest reached 20,000 bags of good milling wheat and the coming season promises to produce anything up to 40,000 bags.

The question naturally arises as to the milling capabilities of the country to deal with this amount. I know nothing of other mills existing or projected, though one cannot travel the highlands without hearing of them. But here are the actual figures of Unga Ltd., which also turns out some 250 tons of posho per month.

The containing building of galvanised iron is 270' x 50' including considerable store room. Adequate arrangements exist for washing, cleaning and drying the grain before grinding. Forty-five bags of flour of 200 lbs. each are at present being turned out daily; but the total consumption of the Colony is about 270 bags daily or 100,000 bags per annum.

A Pure Product.

The business of flour milling is very complicated; consisting really of a process of gradual reduction and purification from the whole grain; all the materials not sufficiently ground to penetrate the fine silk sieves passing back again and again to the rollers. Offal is constantly being taken away during this process to separate receptacles and withdrawn thereby permanently from the continual wearing down of the balance. By working night and day 30,000 bags may be put through annually by the present plant, consisting of a Tattersall's midget maxima short system mill and one long system of the same make. With the duplication of the former, which is now being carried out, the output will be doubled. Neither grain nor flour is subjected to any bleaching or chemical treatment whatever and the resultant product is as pure as anything of the sort can be.

It will be seen from the above that with its new machinery more than the entire Colony's estimated 1922 crop could be dealt with by Unga Ltd., and as this firm has not yet declared a dividend upon capital invested, the industry does not seem likely to be one that should be rushed by the inexperienced. To-day the mill is run by two white men and a lady clerk; and it works night and day. During my visit 10 tons of flour and 20 tons of posho were loading at the siding; while two wagon loads of small orders, not sufficient to fill a truck, went off by road to the station. In spite of this, prices are cut so fine—the management pay Shs. 7/- per bushel for wheat and must soon give less owing to the

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competition of other mills—that the enterprise is only just clearing expenses. Nothing but a much larger output can remedy matters.

One of the chief difficulties is how to get rid of offal, which represents 30 per cent. of the wheat used, and low grade flour. The former is almost unsaleable; and an endeavour is being made to export the enormous stocks on hand. As to the latter, in other lands there is always a sale for it. Here everyone wants the superfine quality made from the very centre of the grain; but unless the coarser qualities can be disposed of freely the price of Kenya Mist, as it is prettily called, will never be cheap.

Critics of this splendid local industry must not forget that however perfect the mechanical side of the work may be, unless good milling wheats are procurable the quality of the product cannot possibly be first-class. Up till comparatively recently growers did not pay sufficient attention to the right varieties necessary for bread-making; and the problem of blending became an involved one. To-day this defect is being corrected. The best wheats grown in the colony for a general purpose flour are "Kt 1," and "Equator," both of which have been evolved and are carefully grown for seed at Mr. Sewall's farm almost alongside the mill.

"Florence" Wheat.

They are hybrids and resemble closely the best strong red wheats of Canada. Samples, submitted to milling experts in England, have been declared of very fine quality and capable of commanding a high price there. Unfortunately, too large a proportion of these wheats are grown in Kenya (probably 70 per cent. of the total output) for it is necessary to have a substantial proportion of weak, white wheats to blend with them to meet the requirements of local professional bakers. Where bread is made in large batches, quick rising flour (made from strong wheat) causes practical difficulties, for it always takes some time to get large quantities of dough made up into loaves and placed in the oven.

Of these badly needed white weak wheats no supremely satisfactory variety has yet been evolved in Kenya. "Florence" is a very fine wheat from the miller's point of view, but it is so susceptible to rust that in most parts of the colony it has been abandoned by growers. It is just possible that in some warm semi-arid areas such as the Laikipia Plateau, Marsabit or Jubaland, it might succeed well and give the settlers there a virtual monopoly of the class of grain most urgently required to-day to blend locally into a perfect bread flour.

Mr. Sewall of Njoro has a moderately good milling wheat, a locally produced hybrid, which is said to be very rust resistant. The mill can, pending the discovery of a better variety, take any quantity of this (named "Njoro Hybrid"), the seed of which may be procured from Mr. Sewall. The Burnt Forest area of the Uasin Gishu has sent in one or two lots of Bobs Riette which have also been satisfactory from the miller's point of view, when properly ripened.

Mr. Constantine, with commendable enterprise, recently offered a prize of £5 for the best household bread-making recipe. Numerous competitors have taken part in this contest and he has been busy for some time in carefully testing the many varied prescriptions sent in—a laborious task that keeps him up at night after his arduous day's work and must really require infinite patience and resolute nerves to see properly through. I understand the result of this competition is being announced and all our local housewives will then be informed of the simplest and most successful recipe with which to make bread from Kenyan grown flour.

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(c) "Loss O' Grass" Estate.

I was awakened on the first morning of my sojourn 20 miles north of Nakuru at Mr. Ben Garland's homestead "Majani Minji" which, being interpreted means "Lots o' Grass"—by a brazen-throated bullock persistently bellowing "Lower Molo-o-o-o"; as if he were a worried porter at a railway station who knew that some tardy passenger had yet to descend from a train impatient to be moving.

Resenting this hint to get about my business at 6 a.m. I dressed and, launched myself indignantly into the garden. There, waiting at the gate, a battalion of strutting, apoplectic-faced turkey cocks in full feather immediately heralded my appearance—despite my energetic protests— with repeated salvoes of gobble-gobbling in a highly trained unison that would have done credit to the band of the Grenadier Guards playing some important general on to the field of battle to the tune of "See the conquering hero comes." Pandemonium, as if waiting for the blare of these feathered cornet players, was thereupon let loose. With one accord hens cackled, cocks crew, ducks quacked, cows moowed, pigs grunted, a steam whistle blew somewhere in the neighbourhood and the sun popped up over the Solai hills.

Here was the awakening of vigorous life in all the infinite variety of a rich, fertile land. I quickly discovered that this concerted and musical hubbub had in fact nothing to do with my presence. That my incognito was in reality strictly respected or unsuspected. And that it was, after all, only the natural ebullition amongst all the healthy happy living creatures around me of spontaneous thankfulness for a good night's rest and joy at the arrival of another glorious day.

As in so many districts of beautiful Kenya, the breezy call of incense-breathing morn in the Molo Valley with its ever fresh brilliancy, awakens all that is most buoyant and cheerful in one's make-up in response to the eternal miracle of breaking day. I have lived in countries where the appearance of the sun's red ball over the horizon is accompanied solely by the ominous hum of millions of awakened flies. Where the temperature immediately rises to an uncomfortable sultriness; and old Sol himself, as you turn your face from him, thumps you on the back with the unwelcome over-familiarity of a bad-mannered acquaintance. And where one tackles almost with loathing—like a sick man after a thick night—the monotonous tasks of the arid scorching day.

But the Lower Molo is of a different calibre to this. Even the flies are not as troublesome or numerous as in an English barnyard during June. There is no counterpart to the wasp. The bracing freshness and sparkle of the morn merge with delightful slowness into the strong warmth of a day that leaves its definite impress of progress, growth or augmenting ripeness on all the living domesticated things that man husbands for his own comfort, enjoyment and support or that of his race. Even during the hottest hours no sirocco from sun-baked desert areas enhances the test of endurance for the European settler to near breaking point. Whatever winds blow are cool, steady and wholesome; and if one has been wise enough to build, on some bold, air-swept bluff, a capacious lofty-roomed home, no matter of what materials, there is always a delicious retreat at hand in the more unbearable conditions of heat to be experienced from the mildly fierce sun of this equatorial district.

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"Majani Minji" lies between 5,500 and 5,500 feet in elevation. From the spacious fruit, flower and ornamental tree-shaded gardens that surround the homestead, looking north across a narrow strip of green grass, a far stretching field of ripening maize slopes upwards to the horizon; to where a hill, too steep for cultivation, still remains primitively clad in natural pasture dotted with innumerable lelishwa bushes. To the south towards the yawning crater of Menengai, which is however concealed from view by a switchbacked hill, the estate is bounded by the vivid green of a 1,000 acre swamp.

The property is slightly over 5,000 acres in extent and at the time of my visit close on 2,000 acres of maize were being harvested. The season had been distinctly below normal in it rainfall and an average of eight bags per acre is estimated where, had the usual precipitation occurred, fifteen bags would have been reaped. One cob I picked measured 13½ inches in length and weighed 1 lb. 9 oz. It was of the Potchefstroom Pearl variety; a maize bred by Mr. Alex Holm, our D.O.A. when attached to the Union of South Africa's Agricultural Department. Mr. Garland, who has a high opinion of this breed, is growing it in quantities.

My before-breakfast ramble—once I was satisfied the farmyard denizens were not being personal—disclosed much of interest to anyone able to appreciate the constructive, well-directed development designs of a master-pioneer. Close at hand, the milkers from a dairy herd of nearly 400 head were lying or standing patiently chewing the cud; what time pantherlike naked Lumbwa milkers moved about amongst them, silently intent on their morning duty; and a boisterous crowd of hungry calves trumpeted their disgust at the slowness of the process which they watched from an adjoining shed.

A series of stone-built loose boxes contained three or four particularly fine Friesland bulls of outstanding merit for bone, bulk and constitution. Amongst these is "Sheltered Vale Sir Korndyke," sired by "Frisco", who took 24 first prizes in South Africa, including six championships. His grandmother yielded 1,978 lbs of milk in 316 days; and he was bought twelve months ago from the Naivasha Government Farm herd. This imported animal is hard to equal anywhere in Kenya for pedigree, general appearance and constitution.

A cowshed containing several selected pure-bred cows near by proves that the breeding of this favourite variety is being taken seriously here. Beyond the cool stone dairy a power-driven posho mill capable of turning out 200 bags per day was running out the staple food of Kenya's native working population. Flocks of ducks, pure Minorcas, mammoth bronze-wing imported turkeys, Sussex fowls, Leghorns, and a troop of fat sows lent variety to the scene. Huge solidly built maize sheds each capable of stacking a harvest of 5,000 bags were awaiting the coming torrent of cobs; and more of these buildings, so essential to the wholesale maize-grower, are to be erected this season.

Backed by an avenue of Grevillea Robusta, whose old gold flowers showed harmoniously against the soft green of their foliage, were a number of Nandi flame trees in showy blossom round the house. Jackaranda, Belhambra, the straight column of yew-like cupressus, pepper trees and yellow-flowering hedges protected the more important, if slightly less ornamental, loquats, guavas, paw-paws and citrus. In one corner a fine patch of strawberry plants in full fruit tempted the stranger shamelessly from the paths of virtue. Elsewhere varieties of bananas, English vegetables and pineapples lent additional culinary and edible charms to

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the medley of prolific growth that has now replaced in this desirable spot the thorn tree and sage-green lelishwa of the natural wilderness.

A Jaunt.

After breakfast, in a serviceable buckboard, I was able to settle down with my host—who is the original pioneer of the entire Molo Valley—for one of those interesting day's jaunts which can only be provided by a great estate and the company of a man who has seen the wild change under his own hand into prolific farming country. In pleasant sunshine, with the diamond sparkle of the dew still on the grass, we sallied forth, past or through great areas of maize producing flats and slopes where the cultivator gets, in one block, his thousand-acre paddocks of soft rich loam such as this grain loves; and, alternately, across the more broken pasture land, sweet with lush, nutritious grasses as high as the mules' shoulders amongst the lelishwa; and whispering of fat beeves and overflowing udders.

The property at present supports 1,400 cattle. On and down we journeyed, bumping across the Equator en route, to the lower end of this great property in the northern hemisphere where 800 acres of maize were in the last stages of harvesting; and the ox-teams, like a series of caterpillars in the distance, had already begun to drag the heavy, three-furrow Ransome disc ploughs, almost in the wake of the cob-pullers and trash burners, over the friable red sandy soil.

Ample areas still remain, in this neighbourhood, waiting for clearing and breaking; and the manager of the section, Mr. Hyland,—his brother manages the Home farm—is already well advanced with his plans for dealing with the problem as well as, simultaneously, with the creation of dams to ensure sufficient water for the draught animals. At this farm a profitable maize sheller with the enormous capacity of 1,000 bags per day was standing ready to operate on the newly harvested cobs. This is the biggest, latest and most up-to-date machine of its kind in the country.

Mr. Garland intends to travel the Molo Valley with this outfit and undertake shelling by contract for growers not able to cope with their heavy crops themselves. A pleasant lunch with hospitable Mr. and Mrs. Hyland; a glimpse of the vegetable garden kept by the active mistress of this house, where a crop of dark red Roselles has been raised to the dignity of a first-class jam, wine and stewed fruit making product by the ingenuity and enterprise of the grower; and then in the sunshine of the afternoon back by the upper road to the old homestead where kindly Mrs. Garland had a hearty welcome ready for us.

Such is a survey of life, work and development on this great property, with its fifty teams of oxen and twenty-five ploughs, in the heart of the Molo Valley country. And valley it may claim to be; for miles away, on each side of its broad bosom are the accompanying escarpments, to the right of Solai, behind which lies the Upper Gilgil territory, and to the left those of Upper Molo and Eldama Ravine, concealing a hinterland that includes the Uasin Gishu plateau. Northwards this now famous maize growing valley runs to lake Baringo and the semi-arid low-lying wildernesses that lead towards Abyssinia.

The valley is now getting quite populated and amongst Mr. Garland's immediate neighbours are Mr. A. J. Simpson, who has joined the former in many a financial and trading venture; Mr. D. Edmondson to the south; Mr. S. McCall and Messrs. Hobson and Gray to the south-west; Messrs. Stanning Bros. to west and north; and Messrs. Baillie Bros. on the east. All these settlers are pioneers with the large estates belonging to their class; but the day is drawing near for the advent of the smaller man

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with the compact, intensely cultivated farm, who by careful husbandry and scientific rotation will control weed-growth and maintain the fertility of these practically virgin expanses.

At the present time there exists a strong hope that within the near future some sort of railway or tramline will be constructed, from the new Uasin Gishu Railway, across this great 30-mile valley to Lake Solai in order to tap the heavy yields of maize and other products that can be grown here. It is certain that the advent of such a line would at least double production almost immediately and encourage rapid sub-division of estates.

It is interesting and instructive, in these days of land settlement committees whose most insistent note is the warning that no man is safe who does not land in Kenya with at least £2,000 cash and £400 per annum income, to meet a personality like the owner of this estate. Mr. Garland started with a very limited capital when he arrived in Kenya's early days, and he has accomplished a fine feat of pioneering, in which his wife has played no unimportant part. An energetic, bluff, sturdy Englishman from Yorkshire, Mr. Garland possesses no social pretensions, but has all his life—from the time he was apprenticed to the butchering business as a boy—set aside the non-essentials of life and worked hard for the position he has attained.

Yesterday and To-day.

He has known what it is to live on congoni and mealie meal, to sit on his own ploughs and to drive his own oxen. His wife, in the early days of their life in Kenya, has many a time taken the family washing down to some creek and spent the day amongst the soap-suds there. Yet none of these things has hurt them and they have outlived many who took the greatest care not to over-exert themselves at any useful work. A few years spent in South Africa gave Mr. Garland an insight into African pioneering life that has stood him in good stead in Kenya.

To-day he is one of the most successful and respected farmers in the Colony, with his family growing up to carry on the traditions and participate in the prosperity he has established. Kenya has never laid itself out to bring in settlers of this type to the Colony. One may go further and say that they have steadily and continuously been discouraged; and those of them that are here have got in despite serious obstructions. Yet they belong to that true pioneering stock of Britain to whom we really owe our Empire; and when the frivolous, the speculator, the barren and the dilettante have tired and dropped out of colonial life they will remain with their children to inherit the land.

(d) A Wheat Acclimatising Farm.

Only a mile or two from the Unga Flour Mills at Njoro is Mr. Sewall's great wheat-growing farm named "Natai Emuin."

Had the founders of Kenya ever looked deliberately for the best site along the line of the Uganda Railway, upon which to found the capital of the colony, they would probably have selected the wide, cool, wind-swept prairie of Njoro at 7,000 feet elevation. In that case Natai Emuin must have been near the centre of the position; or at least it would have become one of the most popular suburbs of the model city.

For from its upper flats all the forest-clad mountainous territory of Upper Molo is visible; while from its lower slopes the vast panorama of the Molo Valley country behind Mangai crater stretches like a sage-tinted patchwork carpet thrown across boulders; until the escarpments of the Solai put a boundary to its march.

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On this property, over 8,000 acres in extent, many of Kenya's most successful wheats have been bred and are being perpetuated. Mr. Sewall, being abroad, an appeal to Mr. Wright, his courteous manager, brought me the invitation I coveted to examine the season's operations on this well-known estate.

Last time I visited Natai Emuin harvest was in full swing. In cool, sunny, and very atypical reaping weather, except that it was dry, a round half-dozen harvesters were in full swing threshing the wheat direct from the stalk into the capacious receptacles made to receive, winnow, sift and bag it. On this occasion, I found wheat in many stages of progress; but none ready for the sickle; or, as one might more suitably say now-a-days, for having its ears boxed. This had its obvious advantages, because it enabled me to observe in their immature stages some of the varieties of seed wheats which will produce much of the country's grain for local bread-making, during the next long rains.

At the time of my visit the farm had 1,800 acres under the plough. An interesting wheat nursery near the homestead first attracted attention; for every variety of wheat that it has been possible to get hold of and many new locally produced hybrids are tested there.

Then away we motored to the various areas of specially selected and sown seed wheats that the Colony is likely to demand by next season. Of these we discussed, as we went along by the fields or past tall wattle plantations, the different, striking qualities of the chief varieties. For example Mr. Wright, from a grower's point of view, likes Golden Ball; a heavy cropping durum wheat that matures in four and a half months and does not know what rust is.

Unfortunately it is only useful for macaroni or the Atta (pancake) Indian trade; and the mills will have none of it for bread-making flour. About "Njoro Hybrid," Mr. Wright failed to show that enthusiasm one expects from the procreator of a new variety. It is necessary to the milling industry at the present time "faute de mieux"; but it is a poor cropper, at Njoro at any rate, and he hopes that a superior heavy-yielding soft wheat may be evolved before long, perhaps with the help of Njoro Hybrid, that will combine the bread-making qualities of this grain with heavy yielding and an equally trustworthy rust-resistance.

Equator, Bobs Riette, and "K.T.I." came each in turn under the relentless criticism of my expert host. Their weaknesses were indicated and their good points mentioned in so matter-of-fact a way that one felt it was no joke being a seed wheat at Natai Emuin; where one is for ever in danger of being dragged before the private-office judgment seat over which that shrewd penetrating pair of eyes presides; analysing one to the last molecule of gluten or protein and promptly relegating one to the dungheap if weighed in the balance and found wanting. The qualified approval of the varieties named, backed up by the experience of Unga Limited milling tests may be taken as being in reality high praise; and the main hope of Kenya's wheat-growing industry at its present stage.

Amongst the other grains grown on this exclusively grain-producing property is a very fine two-rowed malting barley from imported seed. This looked to be a heavy yielder and of fine colour. In addition I was pleased to see a splendid crop of rye, much of it six feet in height and, though sown on a piece of land not specially well cultivated, promising a yield of 30 or more bushels to the acre. Mr. Wright is himself impressed with the potentialities of this crop. Njoro is a district too high itself to produce good maize for posho, though surrounded on two sides with fine mealie country. As

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Incidentally last year the experiment was made of giving, as a special treat to the farm's native labour, a proportion of rye-meal as a special ration. Very soon doubt in the native mind changed to delight. The new food agreed with them excellently and they clamoured for more.

Seeing that rye bread is eaten more or less all over Europe, and is considered by many folk even more nourishing and digestible than wheat, there should be no surprise about this. As an addition to posho, which is poor in protein, it should be in steady demand; for it is as easily ground as maize or wholemeal wheat. But its most notable value must always be that it will flourish in the more elevated regions of Kenya where maize cannot be grown; and there it should take the place to a large extent of maize posho. Introduced to the notice and stomachs of the native worker with a little tact, he should soon take to it; and render places like the Kinangop, Molo, Upper Gilgil, Mau Summit, etc., independent of the heart-breaking carting difficulties, so far as posho is concerned, that the settler has so long put up with. There is, of course, nothing better for thatching purposes than rye-straw. This grain is rust-resistant and is well-known for its quality of doing well on poor land unsuitable for either wheat or barley.

Njoro is one of the best-known and most successful flax-growing districts in Kenya. But Mr. Sewall and his manager leave the development of this crop to their neighbours and confine their attention exclusively to the fascinating problems of acclimatising the grains of the temperate countries to the conditions of our Equatorial highlands. That they are meeting with remarkable success all those who have been privileged to see their work on the soft lava and clay loams of Njoro, will bear witness.

The future of Njoro must surely be bound up with medium sized, highly tilled farms mainly devoted to grain or flax growing and dairying. At present two obstacles prevent this desirable advance occurring. To begin with, running water is scarce and must either be provided for by pipe-lines conveying the essential fluid from the forest area behind and above it, or a system of puddled or concrete dams created to take full advantage of the fine rainfall with which the district is blessed.

The second difficulty is the coarse character of the natural pasture. This, however, rapidly disappears with heavy stocking and by cultivation. The time is coming when it will be necessary to alternate seasons of flax or grain growing with the laying down of pasture and a rotation of roots. Even to-day native clover and succulent grasses appear wherever heavy traffic has stamped out the unnutritious looking wiry grasses that at present cover much of the unbroken land in this district.

(e) How Maize Growing in the Rongai Valley has Developed.

Only a comparatively few years have passed, ten at the most, since a young, sturdy member of a hard-working Shropshire farming family, who had come out to Kenya by chance, rode over the wide sloping hills from Njoro and saw the rich undeveloped land of the Rongai and Upper Molo river country for the first time.

At that period one could travel for twenty miles through an ocean of pasture four feet high from Njoro to the Menegai Crater or from Nakuru along the Molo Valley track and hardly find an acre under cultivation. The keen practical eyes of the young Englishman recognised in this area as he passed over it—like a skilful general surveying a favourable territory on which to give his foe battle—all the attributes of

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an easily cultivated, wealth-producing country such as experienced farmers dream about but do not often encounter. Here, near the line, was rich, deep, mellow soil; very lightly encumbered with trees or scrub. The waving, nutritious oat grass possessed great stock-carrying capacity; especially for oxen and dairy cows. A genial warmth indicated a rapid, growing climate; and enquiry confirmed the opinion created by the general freshness of the landscape that an excellent rainfall favoured this area in normal seasons. Both the Molo and Rongai rivers flowed through it.

So impressed was this wayfarer by the possibilities lying all round him that he registered a determination to acquire some of this territory and settle on it, so soon as circumstances might enable him to overcome the initial difficulties of such an undertaking. The obstacles, however, were serious and would to many men, have proved insuperable. They consisted mainly of those paralysing troubles, that are due to financial stringency. For this pioneer of the Evans family had hardly any capital at all, having landed at Mombasa a few months previously with £25 in his pocket. And the land he had mentally earmarked for the scene of his future activities, although lying idle and for the most part untenanted, had already been acquired from the Government under its egregious auction and grant systems and was in private hands.

I am not in a position to give the full details of how the miracle happened; it was however certainly the result of consummate generalship, personal self-denial and tireless, well-directed energy. I have known determined practical men do a similar thing in both Canada and Australia on poorer country in worse climates. But this type of settler is a *rara avis* in Kenya. It is extremely doubtful whether the greatly sought after ex-Army Officer or retired Indian civil servant, who, according to local correspondence in the press, seems to give more thought to the cut of his pants than to production, even if possessing twice the publicly advised minimum of £2,000 cash and £400 per annum, could have achieved one-tenth of the success that followed. Such folk are as children, of at best amateurs, at farming compared to the class whence come the Evans Brothers. Every man to his trade and damn social superficialities which, together with even the highest forms of snobbery, are always easier to acquire than sterling practical knowledge.

The Start.

The struggle must have been both a protracted and stern one while it lasted. Sid Evans, though he was an alert-minded, cheery souled, physical giant, is dead these four years—a victim to the after-effects of spirullum, caught in the German East campaign. For this splendid lion-hearted fellow, although at the beginning of his new undertaking when war broke out, fixed his affairs as well as he could and went off immediately to the fighting line—not a base camp—and remained out for years. He was in the E.A.M.R. on the 9th August. By 1914, however, he already had two or three brothers at Molo Valley.

Yet I can remember him personally telling me that when he started on his first piece of land he was compelled to buy unbroken oxen for his ploughs with ninety-day bills, selling them as trained at the end of this short period in order to meet his obligations and make a little profit out of each transaction. Little by little, line upon line, he and the brothers who came to his aid organised their enterprise, sans impatience, sans financial funk; wastelessly; and above all without any cessation in their main concentration to produce. Thus it came about that even though three of the

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brothers were for years engaged in the military, the good work went steadily forward; and well they deserved their share in the unexpectedly high prices that dry seasons and the vast demands of the Army's Commissariat created.

Rapid and continuous success has followed the materialisation of Sid Evans' dreams of development since he first looked upon this fair countryside and saw that it was good. Though he is dead there are to-day five brothers of this family of Englishmen farming on their Rongai and Molo River territories; and the old people, away back in Shropshire, may be forgiven if they nurse the illusion that this part of the Empire exists for the free expansion, irrespective of their financial position, of any practical, physically fit, hard-working loyal sons of Britain—upon whom after all invariably falls the brunt of the race's toll in peace or war, and who have always had to pay the piper for Imperial extension, in blood and taxation, and in meal or malt.

The position of this family group at the present time is unusually interesting; for they show between them not only a rate of progress, but also an area under cultivation which in some respects is, for the short period of their residence in a new land, probably without parallel, not merely in Kenya, but also in the world.

This year is, I believe, the tenth since they began to acquire property in the Rongai Valley. To-day they own between them about twenty thousand acres of finest arable land in this district and almost an equal area elsewhere in Kenya; or enough, when developed, to support at least fifty farming families in ample comfort. They still live laborious days and have now, harvesting or ripening for harvest 5,000 acres of maize and several hundred acres of wheat; the former going between eight and ten bags to the acre. Large maize-cribs capable of holding three or four thousand bags each are concentrated at various points on this huge block of country. During my stay at Florida Farm, the main centre of the activities of this group of brothers, the first contracts this season for the sale of their earliest 1,000 tons of maize were negotiated, representing an interim revenue of quite £5,000. The Evans Brothers have gold-mining beaten to a frazzle.

Amongst the several drives I was taken in different directions over this grand estate it was possible to get some idea of its developing and latent potentialities. My first day or two was spent at Florida Farm, exactly 6,000 feet elevation, with its ample model homestead laid out originally by Lord Delamere. Here a water-furrow from the Rongai encircles both the residential buildings in their gardens and the spacious boma many acres in extent, with its numerous out and store houses, pig-styes, stables, maize cribs, a splendidly equipped blacksmith's shop worked entirely by Africans who do all the many repairs required on the group of farms, and a ceaselessly working posho mill. All the paddocks and enclosures that form the kernel of Florida are evenly planted with exotic trees, mainly Grevilia Robusta and varieties of gum or wattle, many of which have grown to immense size. The water furrow and the Rongai permit of considerable irrigation being carried out if desired.

Coffee.

Mr. Bob Evans, who is domiciled here and has had more to do with carrying on since his brother, Sid, died, than anyone else, has, after a period of experiment, satisfied himself that coffee is a paying proposition on the rising lands, hitherto used exclusively for grain growing, between Florida and Molina; and an area of this permanent crop is now being put in every year. Molina homestead, 9 miles from Nakuru is at an

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elevation of 6,100 feet above sea level, in a beautiful cool, breezy situation; overlooking Florida and a wide extent of other Molo and Rongai river country.

Big stretches of these uplands are now being put under the plough and are all breaking up beautifully; the reddish sandy loam of Florida and Rongai gradually changing, as one approaches Menegai, to a brown volcanic soil strongly intermingled with small soft lava debris. This soil is, however, deep, fertile and a wonderful moisture conserver. The crops grown in it appear in every respect equal to those at the lower altitude on the more popular red land.

Beyond Molina lies a great area of this composite estate, more particularly under the control of Mr. Sam Evans, which reaches to the boundary of Mr. Edmondson's big property, at the back of Menengai, if looking from Nakuru. On the eastern boundary is a long range of hills providing splendid pasture for stock, but lacking in water. As, however, there are great patches of hot steam-soaked soil here and there on the hillsides it is quite possible, that condensation may eventually solve this problem as it has at Eburru.

The northern end of this portion of the Evans' land drops considerably and comprises a large area of rich soil in a forcing climate peculiarly suited to maize, which Mr. Sam Evans has developed thoroughly. As happens also more or less all over the Lower Molo country a species of wild jute often growing to a highest of 10 or 15 feet is one of the most troublesome weeds in this locality. Yet it is full of a splendid fibre, samples of which have already been favourably reported at home and might possibly be grown remuneratively, as an alternative to maize, in competition with the Italian quality of this fibre which generally tops the market in Europe for twine and sack making.

Mr. Sam Evans is experimenting extensively with both wheats and barleys and one or two promising varieties are being further developed. The Evans brothers have long confined themselves exclusively to a wheat which is both soft and rust-resistant though usually weak in the straw and a poor yielder, shedding rather too freely. The name this variety goes by is "13 cross 5." It takes four and a half months to mature from sowing and was originally bred on Mr. Sewall's farm at Njoro.

One of the richest portions of the territory owned by these brothers is their Rongai country stretching north from Florida and dropping, as it penetrates towards Lower Molo, to 5,000 feet.

The great stretches of arable country already under cultivation are worked by 70 or 80 teams of oxen. The three-furrow disc plough drawn by 16 oxen is the standard, land-working mechanism. A maize-sheller capable of easily knocking out 500 bags of grain per day operated constantly during my visit; and a somewhat smaller husker was awaiting the advent of an engine, temporarily engaged elsewhere. Ten or twelve wagons loaded up with 45 bags of maize make the trip from Molina to Njoro daily during contract delivery but the new Uasin Gishu line which cuts the district close to Florida and again near the top end of Molina will in a few months profoundly alter for the better the carting problems of this countryside.

Memories.

As I saw the string of loaded wagons with their rejoicing native drivers pull out on to the main road for Njoro, a memory of my years spent wheat growing at 2/6 per bushel in Victoria came back to me. I saw in my mind's eye the young fellow that used to be my former self, loading all alone his wagon with four and a half bushel bags (270 lbs.) after a heavy day's work, before going to his hut to

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[illegible] his solitary evening meal [illegible] own hands; and then, in [illegible] twilight of next morning, harnessing his team and starting on the lonely 15 miles drive through a scorching day to the station; where without assistance he dumped his load into the waiting truck. Then came the dreary drive home with the tired horses and the reloading, often in the dark, for the next day's trip—and so on for weeks or months on end. And I realised with startling distinctness the great many-sided advantages that a serious-minded, thrifty, energetic man, or group of men, intent on production, possesses in a country like Kenya over the settler in a purely whiteman's colony.

The method of cultivation followed by the Evans' Brothers after harvesting maize is of interest because it gets rid of the otherwise embarrassing straw stalks with a minimum of labour and it is also claimed that the soil is materially enriched with humus thereby. The cobless dried stalks are first harrowed flat and afterwards ploughed in with all the weeds that inevitably spring up amongst the ripening grain. This ploughing is then allowed to lie till after the first rains have set weed seeds germinating and the stalks have partly rotted. The land is thereupon deeply cross-ploughed and everything buried ready for next planting.

This great and successful combination of brothers is a phenomenon not often seen now-a-days. They have, like the plain, self-reliant Englishmen they are, worked steadily on, without fear or favour, to the position they have achieved. All decent whitemen with a capacity to make good are wanted in Kenya to-day, but I for one cannot understand why a greater effort is not made, no matter what other types may be desired, to attract to this colony a larger proportion of Old England's grand yeomen; with their historic traditions of work and war. For they have ever been the mainspring of our success as a pioneering race and the source of its most enterprising commercial population. Much painful cant is talked now-a-days about our trusteeship for the poor, simple, black man; and most of it seems to point to an attempt by our sentimentalists to arrogate to themselves the functions of the Almighty. But have we no nearer and more legitimate trusteeship on behalf of the self-respecting loyal workers of our own race?

The Evans' group portrays a very fine facet of truth from the ever-revolving kaleidoscope of ancient wisdom. Namely, that when a family is brought up thriftly and industriously and has learnt to pull together, it is not only a lasting honour, pride and insurance from want to its brave old parents, but is capable of achieving things usually regarded as impossible, provided it possess at least one or two members of outstanding initative, personality and energy. Sid Evans was, I believe, the eighth amongst his brothers and sisters. He is dead—leaving behind a sweet English country girl about to be his bride at the time of his decease, to mourn his loss. Let those who desire to see his monument go to the Rongai Valley and look around. But he laid a train before he died that will take some stopping, if those who carry on the enterprise always bear in mind the spirit that animated him who set their feet on the road to vast prosperity.

(f) The Colony's Premier Ranch and the Stock it Carries.

The homestead of Soysambu, 18 miles east of Nakuru, stands on a broad based bluff overlooking some thousands of acres of rich pasture lands lying between it and Lake Elmenteita, three miles away. Another three miles in the opposite direction are the Uganda Railway

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line and the station named after the afore-mentioned lake. The width of the estate at this place is in fact six miles; and as it also happens that the ranch runs at right angles for ten miles each way to its extremest length, it will be seen that the seat of control and supervision is extraordinarily central for so vast an area worked under one management.

Soysambu to-day contains 83,000 acres; and in spite of its size is one of if not the best, developed, improved and stocked properties in Kenya. The owner, the Right Hon. Lord Delamere, first took up his residence on this estate in 1911; and the manager, Captain E. Caswell Long, first joined it in 1912. With the exception of his three years' very active war service with the Guards in France, the latter has been connected with Soysambu ever since that year, and to-day is in full charge.

Fencing.

The devolpments that make Soysambu noteworthy amongst the many fine estates of Kenya have all been carried out during the last ten years, and were continued steadily or with very little dislocation, even during the darkest and most discouraging years of the war. They include seventy miles of strong boundary and sub-divisional wire fencing, which has to a large extent stopped the migration of game through this great area; and thirty miles of 2" or 3" galvanised iron piping, conducting water to twelve sets of concrete or metal tanks and troughs, strategically placed from one end to the other of what previously was an entirely waterless territory. These in themselves constitute a tremendous achievement bringing Soysambu up to the standard of a highly improved Australian station; but there are also numerous other improvements in the form of permanent buildings, dips, drafting yards, crushes, etc., an enumeration of which would take up too much space here.

This portion of the Rift Valley well warrants the expense and care that its owner has lavished on it. Soysambu, together with a few other pastoral properties that immediately surround it, comprises some of the choicest, sweetest and most nutritious grazing land in the whole length of the now famous Rift Valley bed. The carrying capacity of the ranch is very considerable and, thanks to the fencing, some estimate of this important factor is now possible.

It belongs to that class of stock country which is rarest of all throughout the older settled parts of Kenya nearest to the line, namely true sheep raising and running land; and it is probable that in its present condition it could maintain when fully stocked, 100,000 of these valuable animals. Thus there are possibilities of improving the pastures and thereby increasing this estimate in the future may be taken for granted. So far, however, there has been little time or opportunity, pending the primary creation of the more important conservation and construction developments already alluded to, for experiment in this direction.

But when the time arrives for concentrating attention on the subject of fostering pasture where it is scanty or degenerating it is likely that material progress may be produced on some areas of the run. Possibly Queensland's famous Mitchell grass might be a valuable introduction. But at any rate the splendid native grasses of this Colony, and especially that variety of couch which is the mainstay of the pastoralist along the Rift Valley and indeed in many other parts of Kenya, may be perhaps noticeably encouraged by the superficial treatment of poorer patches of land.

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Soysambu carries to-day a collection of pure-bred and high grade stock without parallel elsewhere in Kenya for numbers and standard of quality. It seems to be the policy of this estate's management to make Soysambu a trustworthy reservoir upon which, if necessary ,any great influx of settlers requiring a nucleus of good cattle, sheep or horses may draw For every class of animal kept on the ranch, and their variety is considerable, as I hope to show presently, may be purchased at prices which are certainly moderate when the earning or general market values are duly taken into account. For example, Soysambu is the only estate known to the writer from which high grade ewes in any quantity may be bought. And if the price (about 24/-) appears to be high, it must be remembered that the annual wool clip is worth at least 6/- or about 25 per cent. per annum on the above figure. There is in addition the annual lamb to be expected.

The average annual cost to the estate of running a sheep works out at 2/8; this leaves an estimate of 3/4 nett for wool and the lamb extra.

Finally it must be borne in mind that none of Lord Delamere's properties are fully stocked; and that his policy of parting with breeders is therefore, from a revenue point of view, not entirely good business. On the other hand it doubtless suits him to some extent to sell; but this again is partly due to the desire to avoid a dog-in-the-manger spirit by permitting beginners to take advantage of the success he has so far achieved in acclimatising and breeding high class stock.

Sheep.

On Soysambu to-day there are depastured 12,000 grade or pure-bred ewes either with lambs at foot or lambing; and so successfully has this important branch of the management been carried out during the current year that it was found difficult to secure barren ewes for exhibition in the merino class at the Nakuru Show. The lambing percentage promises to be 95 per cent. Hundreds of these ewes are for sale, to the great advantage of smaller, newer settlers. In addition, 2,500 fat wethers are on hand for supplying the weekly drafts that go to the Nairobi butchers. And amongst the splendidly select and culled merino rams, many of which are of imported blood, a fine battalion of country-breds has been set aside for disposal to local flock owners.

In all there are to-day 37,000 sheep on the run; and nothing but merinoes are bred because there is every indication that they are by far the best and most reliable revenue producers amongst this species of domesticated stock. They suit the short close grass country of the Rift Valley; and they are certainly also the coming wealth creators for much of that great territory lying around Rumuruti, on the Laikipia Plateau and northwards to the Abyssinia border.

The infusion of Native Masai sheep, upon which all these grades are based, has given bone and constitution to the Soysambu sheep and a body suitable, for prime mutton, yet without sacrificing the fine quality of the wool. The wethers that go to the butcher average a live weight fluctuating between 100 and 140 lbs. The pure-bred strains of merino employed for grading come chiefly from Australia and consist of imported rams belonging to the world-renowned studs of Boonoke (Falkiner's) and the Murray stud of South Australia. The mortality of the entire Merino flocks of the estate has been only 8 per cent. per annum during the last two years.

Over six thousand cattle are also depastured on Soysambu amongst which shorthorns, both milking and beef varieties, are by far the most

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numerous. The estate has now reached a stage in its European cattle acclimatisation when it can dispense with the useful native animal and rely solely upon the further grading up of its various herds of cross-breds. A very fine standard of shorthorn sires has always been a leading feature of this side of Soysambu activities; and to-day the result of many years' steady importation of the world's best blood may be seen in the high quality of the various grade herds.

At the present moment there are fifteen imported Shorthorn bulls in the loose-boxes or running out with the cows and heifers; and an attractive-looking lot of country born aristocrats of this splendid breed are also in constant use. Some hundreds of Soysambu high grade or pure-bred cattle of all kinds including a number of bulls and first-cross breeders are reserved for local sale.

A speciality amongst the cattle here are the Devons; a breed that has not received the attention it deserves in Kenya; where it has long proved itself to be the most easily acclimatised of all imported stock. This is accounted for by the fact that Devons come from a part of England which possesses a tick and is subject to several diseases closely allied, if not identical with, the more prevalent disorders to which stock are liable in East Africa.

As a consequence this grand West Country breed may be claimed to arrive in Kenya already partially immune to many local complaints; and it inter-breeds with the native cattle with little or no setbacks, besides being a splendid doer and hardy forager.

During the last year or two increased attention has been paid to Frieslands on Soysambu. There are to-day several excellent bulls of this breed, of which seven are imported. Amongst these one bred by H. B. Cone of Ficksburg, sire Riven Hill Imperator (No. 1165 Vol. 9) Dam County (No. 2435 Vol. II) is notably good and undoubtedly stands in the running for Kenyan championship honours. The leading Shorthorn bulls (imported) are Redstar, bred by Geo. Harrison, England, a fine beef animal; and, in the dairy class, Forest Prince, sire Forest King, dam Beauty (No. 110, Vol. 3) bred by A. C. Whattley, Westminster O.R.C.

Horses.

No account of the livestock living and prospering on this property would be complete without a detailed reference to its horses. Soysambu has always run a number of these valuable and, in an African environment, somewhat delicate or risky animals; for Lord Delamere has been a consistent supporter of equine sports and interests in Kenya. But since the dispersal of Mr. Clutterbuck's large stables at Njoro the mantle of that popular sportsman, whose departure from Kenya must be regretted by all who knew him, seems to have descended upon Captain Long, the manager of Soysambu; and to-day the stables are full of horses from all over the Colony, apart from those belonging to the estate, to the number of 73.

Camsiscan, the popular and magnificent thoroughbred bay racehorse stallion of Carbine descent being by Spearmint—Camlarg is here at stud. So is Prince Pride, also thoroughbred, 14.3½ hands, a strong-boned active, black-pointed bay, well suited for getting reliable polo ponies. The young stock of both these stallions are well known and liked throughout Kenya; and this year's foaling season has been an eminently successful one. At the time of my visit about 100 horses and mares were being maintained at these stables—by far the largest in the Colony—which are deservedly renowned for their healthiness; no outbreak of horse

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sickness having been recorded on Soysambu during the troublous last three years. A draft of 23 youngsters were prepared here for sale at the close of the recent Agricultural Show at Nakuru, already alluded to, and fetched satisfactory price.

During my short stay on this beautiful ranch I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of gliding rapidly up and down the long motor tracks that intersect it in all directions. The motor-car's advent permits supervision to be accomplished with an ease and rapidity undreamed of in my earlier Australian days when long wearisome rides or drives through the baking sun on horseback or in buggies were the only means of transport to both visitors and harassed managers. The elevation at Soysambu being just over 6,000 feet with perpetual fresh breezes sweeping the estate these outings in the sparkling air and lovely scenery of the Rift Valley gave constant delight which only monotonous repetition might possibly dull. During one trip down towards the green thorn trees on the shores of charming Elmenteita, I was able to inspect the lucerne and maize green fodder patches in a cleared and irrigable paddock of nearly fifty acres. Here a thick stand of lucerne is cut regularly once a month for the stabled stock; and its rapid growth, enabling twelve cuttings per annum to be made, has to be seen to be believed.

Another voyage of discovery in the opposite direction took me right up into the ribs of Eburru mountain, where the estate meets that of Mr. Harvey of "Distilled Water." Here the pasture is lusher and greener than on the plains and shews evidences of heavier carrying capacity. But rain had fallen quite recently throughout the whole district and the verdure of new growth interspersing the short, dry, older grass, was pleasing to the eye wherever one went.

Labour.

The labour on Soysambu is mixed Masai, Kikuyu and Kavirondo. For the reliable herding of difficult stock, especially sheep and lambing ewes, the former, if carefully selected and tactfully supervised, are far in advance of all other tribes; though a Kikuyu who has served his apprenticeship with this pastoral people may approach them closely. The Masai herdsmen are expensive, costing Shs. 20/- per month and rations of rice and ghee. But if they are experienced, reliable men they are well worth it and will each take entire charge of a flock numbering 1,000 to 3,000 sheep.

A tame lion cub which gambolled round the homestead added piquancy to the peaceful scene where once his ancestors wandered unchallenged. This pet evinced a distinct literary taste; or it may have been actuated merely by a dislike for publicity. At any rate, during my temporary absence from the office it bounded in, seized, and commenced to actually devour my unfinished manuscript. A sturdy half-bred Airedale that it had adopted for a playmate seemed to be having a rough time at the baby's hands. I saw him swept, with one playful stroke of the cub's paw, right into the water-trough from which he was trying to drink; and he appeared distinctly relieved and decidedly done up at the end of the day when his charge, the infant king of beasts, was bundled into his cage for the night.

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CHAPTER V.

The Uasin Gishu Plateau, its Neighbouring Districts, and back to Londiani.

(a) Railway Route.

My trip to the Uasin Gishu started from Nairobi or scratch, in sporting parlance; for a loss of kit during the previous month's travelling made it necessary to return to the capital of Kenya to refit.

By choosing a through train to Kisumu which merely stops at various convenient stations for meals, including a night at Nakuru that enables one to enjoy a late dinner at the Hotel and a proper rest in the sleeping carriage, followed by an early morning continuance of the journey over the Mau, the entire length of the railway scenery from Nairobi to the Lake passes in review before the passenger.

Breezy cool Limuru at 7,000 ft., the first considerable station and agricultural district, in its inviting setting of green pastures and forest clad hillside, sets one on the road to Escarpment via chilly Uplands where an up-to-date bacon factory and almost Old Country like scenery and climate are met.

From here onward to Kijabe glimpses of the vast Kedong Valley, stretching for many miles to the South, are seen, in between tall plantations of gum and wattle with which the Forestry Department have enveloped the line.

Near by, in the middle of this immense break away to the distant Masai Reserve plains, stands Mount Margaret, a considerable flat-topped eminence, somewhat dwarfed by the giant extinct volcanoes of Suswa and Longonot that fill the horizon; but it is nevertheless interesting for the reason that here lies buried—in imitation of Rhodes on the Matoppos—one of Kenya's premier settlers.

An hereditary pioneer—he came of the South African 1820 settler breed—Russell Bowker was the first man to occupy this great Valley; and he chose it deliberately, not because of its pastoral or agricultural qualities—though these are of growing importance—but from love of the game with which it teems.

Here, he believed, he could found his dynasty over the big territory allotted to him and still see, at any time he wished, giraffe, eland, zebra, rhino and all the other fauna of Africa disporting themselves or going down at evening to drink at the water holes; and here during his lifetime at any rate every night the battle cry of lion might lull him to sleep.

I can well remember the stalwart figure of Russell Bowker with his determined Viking face and the leopard-skin band round the sun-faded sombrero. To-day his bones lie on Mount Margaret and doubtless lions roar nightly about his grave. But his great estate has passed out of the hands of his descendants.

Kijabe.

After Kijabe, which means the place of the winds, for great gusts and streams of air flow over it to and from the sun-baked lower spaces of the Kedong Valley, the train passes across the flat Longonot country composed of lava ash nearly 7,000 ft. in elevation at the foot of the great cloud-scraping northern wall of the Rift Valley on the right. Then one comes up with the lower terraces of the great volcano that gives the former station its name;

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and Naivasha lake appears in sight the railway gradually slopes down to its station.

From now on, until past Nakuru, one is travelling in the bed of the Rift Valley; but before the station of Naivasha is reached a stretch of stunted thorn-tree country is met, forming a part, or boundary, of Longonot plain. In broad daylight there is little unusual here, beyond a chance of seeing almost any sort of game, including lion.

But if one is fortunate enough to pass at dawn, the flat-topped trees, without exception are occupied, one to each, by alert-headed eagles and other large birds of prey, preening their mighty pinions after an enjoyable night's rest—like so many pictured Phoenices emerging from bundles of half-burned faggots.

In half an hour they are all gone to receive their morning meat from God. A society floating away and becoming lost amidst the fleecy clouds that have rested all night in the form of mist on the hard brows of the Kinangop and the Aberdares above, but metamorphosed by sunrise into drifting, melting snowfields, against the blue canopy of the vast valley. The balance of these winged carnivora specialise on the weedy foreshores of the big lake, which they diligently patrol for careless waterfowl.

After Naivasha a short halt is made at Gilgil, Eburru and Elmenteita before arriving at the second most important town in Kenya just after sunset.

At Nakuru, where the train stops till 7 a.m. the next morning, some danger exists of finding during one's temporary absence at dinner that unknown persons who doubtless believe their need for clothing to be more urgent than the rightful owner's, have removed one's travelling kit.

To insure against this contingency I engaged a native, who offered his services at the right moment, to guard my belongings under the eye of the station askari. On returning from the hotel I found my temporary watchman had employed his time in opening up my blanket-roll and comfortably ensconcing himself in the bunk. When asked severely why he had taken this liberty he informed me that I had given him instructions to do so and that he had made up his mind to travel with me and become my personal attendant.

Apprehensive that something might be missing and resenting his plans for the future I called the askari with a view to having the native examined and seriously warned for his impertinence. But my new attache was cleverer than I had anticipated. With a frank and simple air of truthfulness he informed the askari that his master was cross with him, he knew not why. When asked for his identification papers he blandly informed the policeman that they were in my possession and that he had not seen them since he started working for me eight months ago.

Injured Innocence.

Under the reproachful and suspicious eye of that askari, who plainly believed this romancer before myself, I quailed. Clearly I could not explain away a reasonable statement so artlessly and plausibly made by this childlike African; and the only alternative to changing my attitude by accepting his unwanted services and admitting the truth of his tale, was to go one further and have him arrested. The arrival of the European station-master eased the situation and probably prevented the askari from effecting my own detention.

But even this dignitary was nonplussed by the diametrical opposition of our complaints and the veracious, injured air of the native. Luckily for me however he followed the general rule in such cases namely that when in doubt give the benefit to the Whiteman. As a result the

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native was marched off to the station for enquiry into his antecedents and I retired confused and wondering to my couch.

During the night the inspiration came to me that if any further complications developed the police might command my attendance and delay me indefinitely. This fear caused me to keep a watchful eye on the platform: to be rewarded a few minutes before the train was due to leave by detecting the arrival of two policemen making for my carriage. I had just time to slip out of the other door before they looked in and finding me absent continued searching down the train. At last to my relief we started and I was able to write finis to my little comedy.

Five miles out of Nakuru the through train passes the junction of the new railway to Uasin Gishu the embankments of which are already well advanced.

This is, I believe, the first railway to run athwart the equator. To make something of a hobby of so unique a feature the track is said to have been surveyed so as to cross this imaginary line three times in a few miles; and trains will pop from the northern to the southern hemisphere and back again like a schoolboy playing a game of touch.

From Njoro's open expanses at 7,000 ft. the passenger is carried upward into broken mountainous forest land that seems as one passes indistinguishable from New Zealand North Island bush; and in an hour or two reaches open Mau Summit, the highest point on the line, after stopping at certain small stations, in the forest, chiefly notable for the lumber trade and named Turi, Elburgon and Molo.

Mau Summit.

Mau Summit is close on 9,000 ft. high and a cool breeze that would not disgrace a Scottish or Yorkshire moor sweeps perpetually across its pastures from the earth's upper air currents. Here warm woollen clothing is often acceptable even in the day time: and at night the passenger who has failed to provide himself with good blankets may suffer an hour or two of acute discomfort while passing the divide that at length puts him on the downward grade to the tropics once more. It is at this elevation (or over) under the equator that rumours of genuine chilblains, equal in every respect to the January product of the English climate, are sometimes met with.

The fall to warmer conditions now becomes rapid. At Londiani (7,300ft.) a fresh "South of England in May" type of atmosphere is usually met. Thence one begins to discard winter clothing; but one might adapt the old proverb to the needs of a cautious traveller and advise that till Lumbwa's out ne'er change a clout—though it is distinctly sultry there at times in the valley where that station lies.

Then on past Kedowa, with its horse-shoe bend in the line, to Fort Ternan (5,600ft.) where white drill, or at least khaki shorts and a thin shirt open at the throat, is the most comfortable apparel. Here one has reached the climate of the Canary Islands; and a strong compelling warmth makes one forget the recent bleakness of the Summit, in a perpetually genial glow that may hang somewhat heavily on the limbs of those not dressed to meet the new conditions.

The strong growth of crops, bananas and semi-tropical products bespeaks in addition to the forceful climate, a good rainfall and fertile soil from now on to Kisumu wherever European settlement makes a passing show.

The passenger as he proceeds drops below an altitude of 5,000ft. and almost any tropical product may be grown between beautiful Fort Ternan and Kisumu at 3,800 ft. Indeed coconuts are said to be doing well at Kibos, the last station before the terminus.

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The traveller who knows his East Africa meets again at the lake port that quaintest of all vegetation in this part of the world, the German Sausage tree, which is a common object enough in Tanganyika. The fruit of this curiosity is so like leberwurst hanging up by the dozen in some Berlin butchery that it is said to have constituted a clinching argument with Dr. Carl Peters in favour of the German annexation of the hinterland to Dar-es-Salaam. It seemed as if the country had been designed by a kindly Providence for the occupation of his race. But I understand that all the subsequent prolonged endeavours of Teutonic Scientists to inoculate these queer products with the virus of certain favourite standard makes of continental sausage were not a success; and that not merely until the war broke out but to the present moment this tantalising fruit remains inedible.

The neighbourhood of Koru, Muhoroni and Kibigori the stations following Fort Ternan, reminds me of a curious adventure that befell a correspondent of mine three or four years ago at mile 568, which is halfway to Kibos. But this needs telling separately.

The firm of Messrs. McGregor and Stephen, who are lessees of Mt. Blackett Forest five miles away, also possess a posho mill, with an output of 100 bags per day. But their main activities in Londiani centre around a good-sized, well-situated workshop and factory — which possess a valuable and effective tyre-tightening machine — where they make an increasing number of doors, windows and wagons, or even buckboards, and undertake repairs for the neighbourhood and up-country districts tributary to this town. This useful department of the firm is ably presided over by Mr. Stephen, who lives alongside the works.

Timber Milling.

Later I was able to arrange a visit to the saw mills at Mount Blackett, an enormous elevation clad with cedar, olive, podocarpus, and other well-known valuable timbers. This mountain derives its name from a surveyor who was the first man to catch sight from its summit of Victoria Nyanza, when making the preliminary survey for the Uganda Railway.

The saw mill is situated in a charming valley at the foot of this mountain and is managed by the other partner, Mr. MacGregor, and both he and Mr. Stephen belong to that quiet capable, reliable type of Scotsmen that makes an Englishman proud of his Union. A very complete modern saw-milling plant has been assembled here. A planing machine able to turn out 1,200 running feet of smooth grooved and tongued boarding per hour was operating; also three benches and a breakdown outfit for handling the logs, cutting baulks and preparing them for the general milling. An ingenious saw punch for sharpening and cutting circular saws was also on evidence.

One cannot help comparing a mill such as this with those one remembers in Australia and New Zealand, for appearances and surroundings are strikingly similar. As far as my recollection goes, however, the prices charged in Kenya by the Forestry Department exceed those of the older Dominions. Certainly in the case of Mount Blackett the lumber seems distinctly inferior to that usually recovered from forest leases in the two colonies named; but this may be because the area, being close to the line, has perhaps already been picked over by previous concessionaires. The cedar is small and almost invariably seriously afflicted by fungus disease. All the logs, of the half dozen varieties of timber cut on this lease, are under-sized and a high percen

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are so defective that it is doubtful whether an Australasian lumberman would be bothered to cut them up.

Two or three miles away on the west side of Mount Blackett is the ex-soldier farm of Mr. Preston, an experienced Borneo planter who has built his homestead at the head of a noble slope of land which gives him an entrancing view of forest-clad mountain, grassy Savannah and diversified country. An endeavour is being made on this property to concentrate on producing all the latest varieties of seed potatoes, imported from the best Home growers. Amongst the sorts being planted at the time of my visit were Mark Express, Edgell Blue, Kerr's Pink, British Queen and Arran Chief.

This settler, seasoned with fifteen years of tropical life in far worse climates, is going to stay permanently on this beautiful spot. He and his wife are turning their attention with admirable determination and energy to production, development and home making. The main crops will always be maize, wheat, potatoes and the like. Hundreds of acres of timber must bring in revenue from firewood sales. The dairying capacity of the farm is also very considerable, with a ready market for milk or cream at the Lumbwa factory.

Only a mile or two nearer Londiani lies another ex-soldier farm belonging to an active, keen young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart, which also possesses a fascinating view from its homestead. It is a pleasurable experience to visit settlers such as these, for they are so in love—and properly so—with their excellent farm and happy in their beautiful surroundings. They too are pushing steadily on with production and development, and have a sure and prosperous future before them that many might envy.

An experimental orchard in which everything is growing splendidly speaks well for both climate and soil. The latter, a rich, mature, dark brown—of which the farm possesses considerable areas—is full of humus and very fertile, probably due to the accumulation of thousands of years of debris from forests that undoubtedly grew here until quite recent times when they were destroyed by the wanton burning habits of the pastoral Masai and other tribes.

One feature of this farm must be mentioned. No verbal description of the temperateness and ample rainfall of Londiani can bring the truth about its climate more vividly before the Home man than the existence of a flourishing embryo avenue of young laburnums—that pretty flowering tree which loves cool Northern European conditions almost as much as the beech and holly.

One of the most interesting properties in the Londiani district is that of Mr. Eustace Atkinson, seven or eight miles north of the line and about 1,600 acres in area to which I paid a special visit, passing through a portion of Maj. Drought's big estate en route. Here Mr. Atkinson, having at heavy expense created a series of seven extensive dams, with a small stream running through them all, has been the moving spirit in the good work of hatching and disseminating trout throughout the district.

Not only has he thereby enhanced the attractiveness and value of his grazing farm, but he has brought an inexhaustible supply of delicious food to his door. Wild fowl swarm on the waters and he has utilised this unusual enterprise of his to further beautify the scene with landscape gardening. All sorts of vegetation, from papyrus to wild banana, have been introduced and tastefully planted about the artificial lakes. The outstanding feature of the dams—probably without parallel in Kenya—is the collection of handsome native and imported water lilies. Specimens of the great

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Victoria Regina of Brazil, one of the most notable exhibits of Kew Gardens, are also being secured.

The snug homestead of this estate, with its spacious living-room containing two fire- places, stands in a large, well-stocked garden, full of temperate climate flowers and possessing a fine collection of bamboos.

Cattle do remarkably well on this property; notwithstanding the rough appearance of the herbage which is capable of almost indefinite improvement by feeding down and encouraging finer grasses. Over 1,000 head of stock are in fact depastured here; a surprising carrying capacity being proved thereby which speaks volumes for this clean, healthy, elevated area.

As said before, Londiani, excellent though it be, is not a big farming area; yet it is within the competence of the administration to make it much larger by throwing open more land. The township itself could be turned into a more attractive place also by permitting residential plots to be obtained on the dry, fertile, rising ground south of the line. This would enable the inhabitants to escape for a portion of the 24 hours from the boggy area which at present they are forced to live in and where, in spite of much draining, it must be very difficult to move about or conduct business in comfort during a wet season. Obvious and simple improvements such as these might easily create a very populous and prosperous countryside at this centre.

(b) Mile 568, U. R.

Out-of-the-way incidents of life in out-of-the-way places generally possess an interest warranting their repetition. I will therefore offer no apologies for giving here in his own words the strange adventure of a friend while on a trip to Kisumu in 1918. His statement reads as follows:—

"Now it came to pass that as I wandered towards the great lake in my search for adventure and information, I fell in with a party of men possessing attractive personalities, journeying in the same direction.

In accordance with the custom amongst travellers we conversed with each other; guardedly, at first, but as we grew more friendly, having explained the simple objects that brought me thither, I ventured to enquire the reason that lay behind the pilgrimage of my new found aquaintances. Whereupon they put their heads together for a moment and, having taken counsel one with the other, a spokesman arose from their midst who, addressing me, said: "Since it has pleased you to be frank with us and as you are also an Englishman sojourning in this far country, we will tell you our business; and, if it be attractive to you, we invite you to turn from your present purposes and accompany us. We go into the wilderness to seek a convenient spot, beyond the haunts of other white men, where we may without let or hindrance, raise Cain."

Having spoken thus he passed to me a crystal cup, bright and polished, and a flask containing potent waters, for it was close to sunset.

When I had well drank of the liquor that was named "White Horse," I turned towards and closely scrutinised my companions. For I have seen many countries and numerous people and did not come down in the last shower. Yet though I have on many occasions voyaged with boon comrades and various wild fellows towards the busy haunts of men and have heard them express their intention of raising Cain and painting towns red, it had never before been my lot to meet with pilgrims who, having shaken the dust of the city from their feet were content to seek out the uninhabited fastnesses of Nature for such reason.

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How as I looked at my now found friends I saw, perhaps by virtue of the strange and palatable spirit they had given me, that they were by no means the ordinary Englishmen I had first taken them to be. For my gaze penetrated, as it were, a thin disguise and I perceived in them such types of mankind whence our nation draws much of its stamina, enterprise and character.

The spokesman who bade me welcome to their adventure was dark with the stern face and eagle eye of a Roman Emperor. And when he told me he hailed from near Salisbury, I knew him to be of the seed of some iron framed centurion, belonging to those long dead and forgotten legions that, at the great fortress of Old Sarum, used to roll back the incursion of war-like tribes who welled up periodically from the wild west; only to throw their lives away in vain attempts to overrun the rich eastern districts of Roman Britain. And this belief was confirmed later when, between the interstices of my tent, while dwelling with those travellers, I saw him in the early morning, dressed in a toga of royal purple, telling his servants to do this or that—and they did it hurriedly.

Another of the party was a gallant squire of Kent, of pleasing presence and sooth speech. And there were also, a veteran of great wars, hailing from the Welsh marshes; a prince charming whom everyone held in high esteem; a wily colonial of Saxon mien, who was believed by his companions to be wise, beyond other men, in their quest; and a jovial west country agriculturist of generous person, but shrewd speech and deeply versed in the mysteries of husbandry, as well as strange maledictory terms mostly ending in it that he applied to both trees and herbs.

Now long years had passed since last I was out with the "boys" or had assisted either in raising Cain or painting a town red. But recently, I had stayed at the famous city of Nakuru in the hope that I might witness some of its well-known ceremonies; when pigeons are chopped up as a sacrifice to Bacchus and members of the cult are passed through bar windows. But its glory had departed.

So I seized upon the invitation thus generously proffered me to see life, and expressed my desire to follow these gentlemen into the trackless wastes of the Kavirondo country there to raise Cain with them; for many days, if need be, and we could stand the occupation. For I know something of the hardships pains and penalties that those who devote themselves to such manly sports must endure, having once lived on the Spree for three years

Then up and spake the wily Colonial, who was also thin and wiry; and because I am stout of build, of delicate complexion and possibly soft to look at, while the hair of my head, as becomes a man who has been through the fire of marriage, is meagre and patchy, he gave voice to the opinion that my constitution was too weak; while the length of my leg and my wind were too short to live their strenuous life. While we were arguing the caravan stopped and we all alighted in the failing sunshine at a post on which was engraven the strange sign, "Mile 568." Whereupon the wily Colonial gave me a portly bag which was said to contain green peas, a material, he informed me, indispensable at our coming rites; and seizing a chair himself he drove me on ahead somewhat jeeringly, in the direction of the wilderness.

Now as I walked at a quick pace along a native track between walls of grass as high as my head I was vexed by the inconvenience of my load; for it dragged heavily in the grass or else bumped incessantly

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Road down we switch-backed through leagues of the richest blue-brown loam, a denuded forest country that is capable of growing almost every tree of the temperate and semi-tropical worlds and, in between them, root crops, flax, maize, tea and a hundred other economic products. With a Forestry Department inspired by imagination, working in harmony with organised close European settlement this immense tract of uninhabited Nandi country, possessing a rainfall over 60 inches per annum, might be made the show spot of the British Empire.

There are a hundred species of South American trees alone, at present totally unknown in East Africa, that would be well worth experimenting with in this area, some of which would perhaps entirely eclipse in beauty and utility the everlasting gum, wattle and other Australian trees now universally planted. And if subdivisional arboriculture were pursued concurrently with a systematic survey, it could be made both a profitable national investment and a means for delimiting settlement blocks. But this will be regarded as Utopian and under the present governmental policies and dispensation such a natural method of development is doubtless out of the question.

It was dusk when we ran into the stately groves and avenue that mark the government station of Kapsabit. Our heavy loads had so far delayed us as to render impracticable punctuality to the time-table. But an almost full moon was shining in a clear sky and with a minimum expenditure of time at this station we set forth again in the twilight.

Within the next hour and a half we had passed out of the hilly scrub and forest country of Nandi across the border into the wide horizons of the grass-clad, undulating Uasin Gishu Plateau, which lay spectrally gray around us as far as the eye could reach; only relieved in several directions by the dull red glow of grass fires. In another hour we bowled smoothly into the welcome courtyard of the Pioneer Hotel, Eldoret, right glad of the cheerful promise of bath and an evening meal after our 82 miles journey. Nor were the expectant travellers disappointed. The celebration by a faithful band of Scotsmen and their friends of St. Andrews Night was in full swing at the time of our arrival. We consumed an appetising plate of soup to the inspiring strains of "I'll tak' the high road and you'll tak' the low road" and the never stale or hackneyed love song of dear Annie Laurie.

The piece-de-resistance of good English grade beef was faithfully dealt with amidst the sincere protestations of patriots for the land of their fathers, to which we listened respectfully—secretly regretting that one evening in the encircling year is not also set aside by the Southron breed of men and women to do homage to St. George and Merry England. Finally we partook of dessert amidst the whirl, the yelling and the compelling magnetism of the Highland fling.

This climax of exuberance gradually resolved itself into a pleasant, social dance, that ebbed and flowed round our island table to the steady music of a tuneful gramophone; so that the cadences and jollity of this unexpected experience followed us to our beds and coloured pleasantly the dreamland hours of a restful night.

(d) Eldoret Township.

Eldoret's Pioneer Hotel is the Alma Mater of the stranger visiting the Plateau. He arrives and is dumped down at it. He lives and eats there; and no other permanent place of refuge whatsoever exists for the sole of his foot or the back of his head. Yet if this hotel holds a monopoly of public accommodation it is modest in asserting

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it and very careful not to take undue advantage of its favoured position. Its rooms and rondavels are comfortable and well-furnished; electric light is laid on; a good table is maintained; politeness and attention are shown to the visitor; and the charges are not excessive in comparison to those experienced elsewhere in Kenya.

Perhaps the surest indication of the important place this Hotel holds in the district of which it forms the axis, is its popularity with the inhabitants of the Plateau. Hardly a week goes by but a dance is held in its big dining-room and broad verandahs; many local social functions occur in it; and it forms a permanent Mecca for settlers wishing to do their shopping and visit friends in the township. The hotel is financed under limited liability by settlers in the neighbourhood, who make every endeavour to bring it up-to-date.

Only a few minutes walk eastwards from the hotel, across a small valley, lies the business street of the town and its rather dusty companion streets. From the verandah a birdseye view is obtained of the straggling collection of buildings that comprises the incipient city.

For the present state of Eldoret is that of all young prairie towns. It is raw, unfinished, full of bustle and indistinguishable from dozens of similar urban areas in the making to be met with by any traveller in Australia, Canada, South Africa or the United States. The Anglo-Saxon stamp of unrest and nervous growth is upon it. From this ugly duckling lying in a fold of the vast pampas that encompasses it around will, by and bye in the fulfilment of time, emerge the swan of adult growth.

The Government township itself is of considerable size; but lopsided in relation to the existing business district, so that private lands adjoin it within a few minutes walk of the main street. Plots are selling for private, residential purposes on one or two of these estates, especially that known as Elgonview alongside the central township which is in the hands of Messrs. O'Shea & Co., at reasonable prices and should make gilt-edged and potentially very valuable real estate. Indeed Eldoret strikes one as the sort of place where a man with some cash capital and a private income who does not want active occupation might buy a few sections, make a comfortable home on one of them, develop the others for rental to people requiring residences and quietly and carefully participate in some of the many splendid openings for profitable investment that naturally occur in a new and progressive country.

At the present moment the townsmen are naturally anxious as to the Government intentions with regard to the position of the new railway's headquarters and workshops. Ample space exists in the unused area of the township for these necessary departments of the big undertaking. But rumour hath it that these much desired sources of local prosperity are to be placed ten miles down-line in the Londiani direction. Officialdom is very afraid they may unwittingly do someone some good; hence the proposal to buy back alienated farm land away from everyone rather than use the public property reserved for the purpose in Eldoret township.

Building is actively going on along the main thoroughfare under an able and practical contractor Mr. Grove, who seems to have constructed most of the important offices in the town. A very good brick is made locally and this is the material mostly favoured. At the bottom of the chief street the Plateau Maize-Growers' Association an active and beneficial body created by local settlers, is housed temporarily in a spacious plot of its own. As one goes up the street the printing works belonging to Mr. Ethe-ridge, who publishes a weekly advertising sheet is on the left. Nearly

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[illegible] my legs, and seemed to be full of shot. But I made shift to keep moving while talking over my shoulder to my friend; until I found he had fallen behind in the gathering darkness and was lost to view.

That night we reached a camp which a fair ladye, hearing of our coming, had hospitably created; and we ate freely of good fare, also spread before us by our gentle hostess. But though I waited after dinner expecting my new companions to produce many bottles of beautifully delicious liquors, they merely tasted the fluid named "White Horse" and, without a fight or singing one song, retired to bed; having first cunningly concealed the flask which I had noted was by no means empty. Next morning, and for several days, my companions rose early and, having washed and eaten, started off to look for, as I supposed, their secret store of strong waters in order to begin their amusements.

The centurion with tireless tread and swinging stride led us ever onward through the blaze of the tropic heat, enabling me to secretly nurse a thirst of great magnitude; while the gallant squire rode by our side or lent his steed to others. And though, at many likely spots we industriously sank holes and scraped away soil, never the sign of a hogshead or cache of bottles did we come across; whereupon we returned to our camp and spent an hour or two, after having eaten, secretly repining in our tents.

And nightly my companions thumped the table saying they would of a surety raise Cain in that place; yet, having but tasted the White Horse they retired to bed. My only satisfaction during this period of anxious, fruitless anticipation was the fact that every day, though the wily Colonial of Nixon men still laughed at my person, he invariably fell away from the party and lagged behind; informing us however that he would shortly buck up and walk us off our legs.

Indeed had we discovered the hoard of strong waters I was always expecting to see unearthed, each of us could have drunk a firkin before he would have arrived on the spot.

But one evening the centurion announced that our quest was finished. Whereupon I argumentatively begged him to explain his meaning, for there was not even a bottle of rum between us. In reply he answered that if those present would return in three years time they would find the cane, good sugar cane, really being raised on this spot. Then they spake interminably to one another of grants of lands, of profits gross and net, and of shares and debentures. So perceiving that the party was bewitched, I passed on sorrowfully to Kisumu."

This was the tale of mysterious adventure sent to me by my friend and as my train steamed beyond Kibigori towards the Lake town I became aware of a new station named Miwani behind which rose a great factory. On thousands of acres of the level plain in its vicinity waved the tall foliage of sugar-cane ready for cutting; and as I saw this development the problem that had bewildered my correspondent was made clear to me

(c) To Far Away Eldoret.

Shortly after midday Messrs. O'Shea and Co.'s two Eldoret mail motor cars, carrying amongst other goods, 600lbs. weight of postal matter for the Plateau, whisked out of Kisumu with myself as a passenger in the front seat beside the leading driver. Hot, dusty and dry, the rocky environments of the Nyanza town, which form the terminus to the Uganda railroad, were

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their least inviting mood; and without the slightest trace of regret we turned our faces from the precincts of the great lake towards the beckoning olive-green hills in the distance and braced ourselves for the three thousand foot lift that had to be negotiated before dark if our time-table to Eldoret was to be kept.

Nor were we long in beginning the climb. Even from the outskirts of the town the wavering scar of this important highway could be seen reaching far over the mountain side of Kavirondo country for many a mile before us. Within half an hour we were out of the plain, and feeling increasingly the breeze off the big sea water as the laborious ascent between the sparsely scrub-covered foot-hills steadily continued. A few miles of this toil and the heavily laden car found relief in a temporary decline. Here intense cultivation patches gave evidence of a large native population. Crowds of small naked boys watched us closely, with the concentrated interest of incipient chauffeurs as we gave the heated engine a few cooling moments, while powerful looking, big framed men, or tall slender women, many smoking long pipes, and all very scantily draped, passed us with the nonchalant air of adults who have more important things to think about than mechanical toys.

Then onward and upward again went tirelessly this excellent passenger service; each tense climb being relieved by the relaxations of a dip until we ran out of the rich volcanic stretches of the intermediate levels into primary rock with its sandier soils and characteristic granite, feldspar and gneiss boulders.

At about 17 miles from Kisumu was reached the most critical rise on the whole journey and the experienced driver sighed relief as we topped the rise whence our last glimpse of Victoria Nyanza was caught over 2,000ft. below, a radiant sheet of glory in the westering sun. A few miles further on in cool bright afternoon air and verdant country we reached a mountain stream dammed back to a large pool in a forest glen, with a capacious saw mill at its lower end belonging to an American mission. We ran by this institution a little later, and found it to be almost flauntingly bedecked with stars and stripes in all directions.

Local respect for this mission stands high for "laborare est orare" seems to be its motto so that natives who have been through its training are rendered more efficient rather than more helpless. A kindly Canadian, who has become famous as the good Samaritan motor expert along this track, is the presiding genius.

The next few miles took us into the Nandi country. Rapidly we traversed a sea of bright green waves and foam where succulent looking dwarf shrubs and bush prevent all growth of pasture; and bear testimony to the existence of some agricultural tribe here perhaps a couple of hundred years ago that cleared the big timber before they passed on into the unknown, probably victims to the predatory tribe that now sprawls, lazily and uselessly across this vast area.

At Kaimosi (32 miles from Kisumu) we stopped for a hurried tea. Pressing forward immediately after we caught a fleeting glimpse of the coffee plantations, clearings and pioneer huts of the ex-soldier settlers as we passed; an attractive looking Alsatia, far from the rolling crowd's ignoble sway, even if the long arm of temporary financial depression haply reaches it.

Then into the ever greener growing Nandi country for mile after mile until Erin itself might have to look to its laurels in comparison with the fresh verdure of that inedible carpet of short scrub, sheltered here and there singly or in clumps with mature trees.

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opposite is the National Bank of South Africa. A little further on the right is the spacious hardware store and estate offices of Messrs. O'Shea & Co., an enterprising firm that also runs a garage, whence start their motor mail services to Kisumu, Kitale, etc., This firm is agent for the Ford car of which there are eighty on the Plateau. It speaks well for the popularity of this make to learn that ten were ordered during last month.

Beyond again, on the main street, is the Post Office; behind which are the Pioneer Garage and Auctioneers of whom Mr. McNab Mundell, late of 9th Lancers, is partner. This firm also has undertaken, since 1910, the work of estate, commission and insurance agents. It is the oldest firm on the Plateau. Although it does not run regular services, the cars of this business are frequently requisitioned by wire or through their agents, (the Motor Mart & Exchange and Messrs. Monckton & Soar of Nairobi or Messrs. Springett & Co. of Mombasa) by visitors desiring special transport from either Londiani or Kisumu. They are also the local agents of the Hupmobile and Overland cars, examples of both running on the roads in their services. This firm possesses one of the most complete and up-to-date japanning plants in Kenya.

Across the road from the Post Office is the Central Butchery belonging to Mr. Kibson, one of the most interesting personalities on the Plateau and the father of Eldoret. This gentleman, who came to East Africa without any capital, is certainly the oldest inhabitant of the town and one of the first to reach the Uasin Gishu in the early days of settlement. He came up in February 1909 and has never been out of the country since, except to participate in the German East Africa campaign. He is 62 and has a sturdy family brought up on the Plateau all of whom are somewhere in Kenya Colony.

Eldoret is severely practical and businesslike about town; but in the evenings, in many of the pleasant villa and bungalow residences that are springing up, relaxation in the form of tennis is usual. Golf is also played a little and there is talk about laying out golf courses. The only place of temporary non-alcoholic refreshment during the day is the verandah of Messrs. S. Jacobs (Eldoret) Ltd., the leading store in the township, which is the Whiteley's of the Uasin Gishu Plateau. This place of business is situated above the Post Office in the very centre of the commercial quarter and is under the control of Mr. Ghersi, a keen, enterprising young man. Everything in the grocery, domestic furniture and general equipment lines may be purchased here by the householder and settler. Many kinds of agricultural machinery are also stocked.

It is only in a corner of the pleasant verandah belonging to this big concern that the visitor on sight-seeing bent can find a comfortable place to take his ease and rest for a while from the tiring perambulation of the streets. Nearly all countryfolk coming to Eldoret for the day drift into this cool asylum at tea-drinking hours. It is the general place of resort for local news exchange and the housewives out shopping, as well as many business men, congregate there about 11 a.m. for refreshment which, at the time of my visit, consisted mainly of delicious strawberries and cream.

The street ends with a fine brick structure that houses the Standard Bank of S. A. Away to the left is the Indian bazaar district; to the right a new club has been started a few minutes walk from this corner.

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The above comprise the present and pioneer business generation of Eldoret; it will be interesting to compare this list with one compiled in fifty or even twenty years' time. There is in addition a wheat milling plant, practically complete for superfine flour production lying idle in the hands of Mr. Prince, manager of the National Bank of S.A. And a branch of a Nairobi firm of chemists has recently opened.

The town possesses a Chamber of Commerce and the settlers have just taken over the Government Hospital near by the business centre, a comfortable, airy building with seven beds; presided over at the time of my visit by a very capable looking and amiable sister, evidently rather bored at lack of business—for it was quite empty.

Only ten minutes out of town is an excellent and capacious Government school established on very similar lines to that at Nakuru. Christmas holidays had just commenced when I called at this institution, but I learnt that thirty boarders were accommodated last term and forty day children. Next term fifty boarders of both sexes are expected and seventy or eighty day scholars.

In the Municipal surroundings of the town nothing of striking interest meets the eye, amongst the sea of grass with which it is enveloped, unless it be a large plantation of gums, cupressus and wattle. This is not only an ornament but proves that timber can be quickly grown on these plains. Firewood is undoubtedly a serious difficulty here until the railway gets to Eldoret; and it speaks well of the citizens' foresight that they prepared for this need by planting trees to meet the coming demand. A burgher rifle range is situated between the belts of this grove.

(c) Some Impressions of the Uasin Gishu Plateau.

Every young country that the Anglo-Saxon has established seems to possess, at some time or other, an area where unbridled individualism and opportunity are only limited by the constitutional capacity of the pioneer to enjoy them. In America, that vast undefined territory known as the wild and woolly West, as did also Westralia in the palmy days of its gold rush, attracted the more aggressive and enterprising spirits of the white race who manifested their exuberance of energy in all kinds of weird actions and perpetual ebullitions of boisterous excitement.

Up till quite recently the Uasin Gishu Plateau has played the part of Kenya's wild and woolly West; and many a night of good-natured roystering has the now almost ancient Pioneer Hotel witnessed. To-day an exemplary orderliness reigns; an effect undoubtedly due, in no inconsiderable part, to the depression that is inflicting itself, in common with many other countries of the world, upon the Colony, and also to the advent of womenfolk. The old juvenile spirit passes; but it cannot perhaps be better illustrated than by the history of the first overdraft ever negotiated on the Uasin Gishu—as told by a leading business man of Eldoret.

Shortly after the first bank to establish itself on the Plateau had entered into occupation of a room in the only office building existing at the time, a settler came riding hastily into the township and enquired of my informant whether the rumour was true that this important financial institution had really arrived. The business man waved him towards a door down the passage bearing the bank's name. "Right-ho," said the settler, "here goes for an overdraft," and in he went. Half an

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Afterwards he emerged, flushed and radiant, waving triumphantly a hundred-rupee note. "Come on boys" he shouted to all and sundry, "and drink success to the first overdraft granted on the Plateau." The inhabitants of the town flocked to the local bar and an invitation was sent to the bank manager to join the party. In a couple of hours the overdraft was exhausted, and later in the day a somewhat shaky, but very happy, settler scrambled on to his mule and made his way back into the bush.

Fortunately depressions, no matter how prolonged, always pass away eventually; often leaving behind them one permanent and perhaps their only beneficial result in the settled seriousness and economical habits of those who have had the grit to weather the storm. No better instance of this could be given than the great Australian depression of the nineties of last century, which was due to extensive local bank failures consequent upon a world-wide drop in the prices of merino wool. That long-drawn period of unprecedented stagnation lasted more than a decade—the writer speaks feelingly, for he spent the most vigorous years of his life struggling under that handicap—and ended in a record era of prosperity which continued steadily until the recent war commenced.

The inhabitants of the Plateau are in many respects the counterpart of the cheery Australian and New Zealand populations who slogged through that dreary slough of low prices and trade stagnation to the dry land of remunerative returns and brisk business. And the true colonial spirit they display in this respect is likely to be rewarded by a fairly quick return to normal times. Optimism, cheerfulness and a belief in one's country are indeed virtues that often bring their own reward by ensuring a habit of happiness foreign to the grouser even when good times do eventually arrive.

Improving Position.

To-day the Plateau dwellers are, at any rate, in better case than the citizens of the older Dominions or any part of Europe, handicapped by their far more complicated problems and responsibilities. With a profitable export trade in maize when the railway, now surely creeping over the ranges towards them, reaches Eldoret, most of their troubles will be past and money will flow into the producer's pockets. There are other products also, more especially wheat and coffee, that promise further material income in the near future.

Already the organisation necessary to deal with the grain crops of the Plateau is in vigorous being; and indeed is to-day handling the main bulk of this year's harvest, which is being transported to Londiani by its own ox-wagon service, pending the arrival of the railway. This organisation is a co-operative concern named "Plateau Maize Growers Limited" called into existence and loyally supported by the settlers themselves to the number of nearly three hundred members, all of whom are producers.

This company has a capital of £10,000 but confines itself to selling members' produce and therefore keeps clear of all speculative business. At the present time it is however contracting to supply maize-meal for the labour occupied on the construction of the Uasin Gishu Railway extension from Mile 60 to its proposed terminus in the Turbo Valley. The Company also buys sacks for its members in large consignments direct from India, as well as agricultural implements, and it has just entered into a scheme to buy oxen wagons and trek-gear for re-sale to members.

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The magnitude of this latter task will be gauged when it is known that some of the farms concerned are 130 miles from railhead and 66 from Eldoret. The Government has come to the Company's assistance by giving facilities that have enabled it to borrow money from its bankers for this purpose. There are about 200,000 bags of maize and 20,000 bags of wheat to shift this season from the Plateau and its neighbouring district, in which the Company also operates, the Trans Nzoia.

As to the area—one of the easiest to cultivate and develop in the world—over which this active and beneficial concern operates, very ample opportunity was given me during my stay at Eldoret to superficially inspect it. The various districts that comprise the Plateau alone cover an expanse of at least 1,500 square miles; nearly all of which is suited for maize or wheat. A rough calculation made by the writer of what this area will be able to turn out annually when it is fully developed is six million bushels of grain, two thirds of which will be maize, and easily worth of £1,000,000 per annum.

To the north the Plateau runs through Soy to the Little Nzoia river, across which lies the fertile Trans Nzoia province. To the west of Soy is the Turbo Valley—where there are a few American settlers—a particularly rich maize, coffee and general farming country that merges into the Nandi border, which forms the western boundary of the Plateau.

A run out in this direction on one of the Pioneer Garage's powerful Hupmobiles enabled me to gather an intimate idea of the spaciousness and richness of this neighbourhood. A number of New Zealanders have located out this way; and as they hail from one of the finest portions of the Overseas Empire I was anxious to get their views on their adopted country.

Without exception they are satisfied with their choice; and everyone of those I met admitted that no richer land—if as rich—was known to them, in any part of the Antipodes than the Nandi Border, while the climate at 6,000 feet, which is the average elevation here, is more equable than anything they have experienced elsewhere, and materially milder than the hot season in Maoriland.

"When," one of them added, "the native stock diseases are eradicated—a matter for close settlement—there will be no country in the world more favourable for dairying and maize growing or capable of carrying a higher percentage of cattle to the acre." In this connection a friend with a farm on this same border, but a few miles to the south, informs me that on an area of 13 acres he was able to entirely enclose he has run continuously 40 cattle for two or three years without the beasts being at any time short of feed or losing condition.

The yield of maize on the Nandi Border is phenomenal, returns of over 20 bags to the acre being commonly reported; but the average for the Plateau proper is about 9 bags of 200 lbs. The official coffee expert, who recently visited the district, informed the settlers that they possessed the best coffee land he had ever seen; but I lay less stress on this utterance than on my own enquiries, for the same remark from this source has been repeatedly reported to me from other districts I have visited. Certainly the Nandi Border with its deep fertile soil, its lovely climate and its ample rainfall (about 60 inches) is one of the most promising areas in Kenya.

Amongst the farms I was privileged to inspect while out in this direction was Karaniat, 8 miles

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West of Eldoret, managed by Capt. Jones; the entire estate running into 20,000 acres, is owned by Chester Beatty. Here maize, coffee growing and dairying are carried on extensively. Flax production has been temporarily suspended and the splendid modern, well-equipped brick factory and press are idle. A very fine series of 22 styes built of compressed murrum or gravel, faced with a natural cement dug out of the river bed near by, is a solid and remarkably inexpensive piece of workmanship.

Lying Unused.

Next door lies, under the shadow of Mount Eldoret, the estate of the Shamba Flax Land and Development Co., Ltd., (5,000 acres) whose acting manager, Mr. Scott, in the absence of Mr. Newton, the senior manager, hospitably entertained the party with which I was travelling. Here again the condition of the flax market has thrown affairs into some confusion and the valuable, capacious, well-built factory lies unused, though maize meal is being ground.

The fertility of this splendid estate indicates that, even if it be decided to materially reduce or cut out flax production, it possesses a great future as a maize, wheat-growing and dairying proposition. It is one of the principal defects of the big estates system, hitherto chiefly favoured in Kenya, that if anything goes wrong with a property e affairs the entire area is adversely affected from a productive point of view, and may even be permitted to lie fallow or go back to couch grass and scrub.

Where medium-sized holdings exist the proprietors, should they meet with a set-back, cannot afford to throw up the sponge; but, by careful living and increased energy rapidly turn their arable land to account in some other direction. All the Nandi Border country is capable of almost illimitable development in the direction of intense farming, paddocking and culture, and to get the best results should be settled by energetic practical men controlling moderate or small estates.

The Soy country is an area of wide-reaching, healthy stretches of land alternately suited for maize, wheat and pastoral pursuits, with some coffee land in the river valleys. Like much of the Plateau the soil is often somewhat shallow, but not too shallow to grow grain.

An outing to the east of Eldoret gave me an insight into the vast stretches of sweet, sun-searched country extending to the Algao Escarpment, which breaks away with a drop of 4,000 feet into the low-lying Baringo Lake territory north of Lower Molo. Passing van Rynveld's splendid farm with its homestead lost in many acres of wattle and gum plantations our ripping, tearing Hupmobile bore us across the great treeless prairie, in the teeth of the cool breeze that sweeps the Plateau, over a fine wheat and stock country towards Mount Sergoit; a lonely, land-locked Gibraltar that stands sentinel over this district. On we rushed, leaving the Police station, prettily situated on a bluff overlooking Lake Sergoit, to the left, until the country changed to a richer, lightly timbered type of more broken park-like land. We passed en route the bone of some slaughtered elephants, who had recently invaded this area.

Along this track Sergoit farms began to appear and notices indicating the existence of a Plateau Flour mill and saw mills were met with. Fine areas of heavily yielding wheat lands occur over the uplands here; and splendid forests are on the escarpments. We were now on the farm of Mr Paul Chapman, a well-known settler and pioneer who however was staying at another property further on; and after a few more

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miles of rugged mountainous road we reached his temporary abiding place in a spacious valley amongst pasture-covered hills.

Here, for the first time in my experience of Kenya, I participated in an alfresco dinner; our repast being enjoyed under a spreading thorn tree, with a great log fire blazing to leeward and the stars twinkling at us wonderingly through the still air and dark blue canopy of heaven. A happy and memorable experience; enhanced by a lively and attentive host and a well-appointed table and service.

Irrigation Work.

On this farm of 5,000 acres at 6,000 ft. elevation the owner has created an irrigation system that meanders for miles through the hills and, when completed, will supply water to 3,000 acres of the estate. A fine citrus, lucerne, coffee, maize, wheat and dairying property this.

After a dreamless night and an open-air breakfast under the thorn-tree, with charming scenery in every direction, combined with the cooing of doves and surrounded by a ring of gorgeous hollyhocks, we left Moy Ben River estate, speeding westwards through the hills and vales of Sergoit. For morning tea we called on Colonel and Mrs. Foster, at another stock and maize growing farm, enjoying the grateful shade and coolness of their deep verandah, fringed with blue morning glories, what time we discussed some of the many problems of this young country.

Then out on to the plain and prairie through miles of fine maize and wheat land once more, leaving the rugged forest areas behind us, until we rested for half an hour at the Pardoe Brothers' big estate, called Campi Simba, (9,000 acres) where both maize and wheat (600 acres) were ripening to harvest side by side and a beautiful garden, lined with light blue plumbago, led up to the pleasant homestead. Here the rainfall is 35 inches per annum; the wheat yield 6 to 8 bags; and substantial buildings have been created from the murrum sub-soil cast in blocks or of well-baked bricks made out of the easily farmed sandy loam that constitutes the top soil in this area.

From the Pardoe Brothers' farm we steered west across thousands of acres of level or slightly undulating land lying practically ready for the plough. Some half a dozen stunted trees to the acre but of no great girth, are the sole obstructions. Our next place of call was at Mr. Tait's, in North Plateau district; a cool, comfortable house amidst widespread plantations of gum, wattle and Grevillia Robusta.

This settler, now a leading Plateau maize and wheat grower, was, only a few years ago, a London business man and a member of the London-Scottish regiment at the outbreak of the war. Determined to settle somewhere in Africa he visited South Africa, Rhodesia and the Congo; finally coming to rest on this beautiful plain, where he is quite satisfied with his farm and prospects. A jolly tennis party was assembling at the time of our visit and the game—practice for the big Xmas tournament to be held in Eldoret—had started before we motored out again.

Thence our course lay through Lord Kitchener's extensive property, where also a considerable acreage is under maize. After traversing a few more miles of fine arable, but still mostly virgin, land, shewing a proportion of native olive timber—an indication of strong, sweet, deep soil—we reached at last Soy Hotel in time for a thoroughly appreciated sun-downer.

An interesting and authoritative personality it was my good fortune to meet while staying on the

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Uasin Gishu Plateau was an experienced surveyor, Mr. Kolbe by name, who is also a keen horticulturist. This gentleman has spent a life-time in surveying new African territories ahead of settlement, especially large areas of South Africa, Zululand and Rhodesia. He was forced to give up his work down South owing to rheumatic gout which interfered seriously with his mobility. As a forlorn hope he came up to Kenya many years ago, recovered his health and has surveyed much of the Uasin Gishu and Trans-Nzoia. He is still busy professionally though well over sixty years of age! and, very naturally, has nothing but praise for the temperateness, salubrity and attractiveness of the Plateau, in the productive future of which as a world granary he has the profoundest faith.

(f) The Remarkable Village of Soy.

The village of Soy is situated 15 miles north of Eldoret and constitutes a remarkable pioneering feat of one of the Uasin Gishu's earliest settlers. It is not an exaggeration to say there is no parallel in all Kenya Colony to this little village, created by Colonel Swinton Home on a corner of his estate. For it is attractive and compact and complete, and its position has long made it the natural business centre and rallying place of a large proportion of the settlers on the Uasin Gishu plateau and neighbouring districts. Its establishment dates from 1912, or one year before the bigger and more ambitious centre of Eldoret was gazetted as a township.

The present strategic position, economically speaking, of Soy, which will be within 7 miles of the new railway, may be quickly estimated by a glance at the map; but the following distances even more clearly denote its geographical pre-eminence in relation to the more important districts of the plateau. The post office of the village is 40 miles from Burnt Forest (south), 30 miles from Kitale (north), 29 miles from Algao saw mills (east), and 24 miles from the Kipkarren area on the Nandi border (west). The village itself, with its neat little hotel, well supplied with substantially built rondavels and other accommodation, its smithy, flax, posho and mineral water factories, its tailoring, butchering and saddlery making shops; its wagon building works, store and garage, constitutes the nearest approach to a prosperous, English village, in relation to the big estate of which it forms a part, that the writer has yet seen in any overseas British country. For years it comprised practically the sole shopping centre on the great Plateau for settlers, and though to-day many competitors have sprung up it still sturdily holds its own, fulfils an important function in assisting to regulate prices and, thanks to its position, has every appearance of possessing a permanent future of ever-growing service to the local community.

A notable feature of the commercial side of Soy Estates, also controlled from the village, is the transport system back and forward from Londiani, which began in 1913 with three wagons. This essential convenience, in a territory that has been from its earliest days of settlement over a hundred miles from the railway, constitutes an important contributory factor to whatever measure of success—and it is very considerable—has already been achieved on the Plateau. To-day twelve teams are constantly at work on this service, and while in fine

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weather the journey only takes seven days each way, during the rains a team is hard put to it to go the round in a month over the indescribable roads produced by constant traffic on wet, unmetalled roads. Under the best conditions this service can place 1,100 bags, or 100 tons, of maize on the railway each month. But when the country is thoroughly soaked no one can say definitely what a wagon is able to get through with to the line, or indeed whether it will ever reach its destination at all along a track where it not infrequently happens that not merely empty vehicles but even individual oxen get so badly stuck that they have to be pulled out by double banked teams.

A stroll round the various industries of Soy village gives one a high opinion of the efficiency concentrated here under the supervision of the general manager. An immensely powerful up-to-date cold tyreing press clamps the iron tyre rims of defective wagon wheels onto their felloes in five minutes, by means of a hydraulic pressure of anything from 5 cwt. to over a ton to the square inch. A truing and turning wheelwright's lathe creates nearly every part of a wheel, bores the spoke holes and finally trims it to mathematical correctness for smooth running. Complete wagons and carts are built on these premises. A capacious Barron's disintegrator turns out 76 bags of maize meal daily; after the grain has been taken off the cob and graded by a maize-sheller with a capacity of 800 bags per day. Wholemeal flour is also ground from wheat in this department. A flax-mill with 30 berths prepares retted straw into hanks of clean fibre under the care of an Irish flax expert; and it is then baled up for export by a Hollins and Guest Baler, that compresses it with a hydraulic pressure of 2,000 lbs. to the square inch. The mineral water factory with a capacity of 200 doz. bottles per diem is at present turning out 48 doz only; but that seems to be the maximum local consumption of the Plateau and some time must elapse before the demands of an increasing local population put this useful branch of Soy activities on overtime.

The European staff of this busy centre consists of the owner and others, the former giving most of his time to the agricultural business of his estate of some 4,000 acres, while Indians and Africans are employed in the workshops and factories, under European supervision.

A Modern Dwelling.

The owner's dwelling-house, lies between the village and farm-buildings, half a mile from the former, with which it is connected by telephone. It consists of a fine roomy and solidly built stone and brick residence of westerly aspect with numerous bedrooms and bathrooms, double-faced with deep verandahs that enable the inhabitants to avoid excessive sunshine by the simple expedient of migrating to the other side of the building. The whole is lit by acetylene gas. There are also a cottage for guests and the manager's house.

Terraced lawns of a local variety of Kikuyu grass, with large herbacious borders, front the west, possessing an extremely pretty view of the valley of the Sergoit river and the Nandi escarpment in the distance.

The farm buildings, consisting of large stone buildings with sheds for machinery and grain, lie across a small valley with a permanent stream rising from a strong spring, near which are spacious wire-fenced paddocks for breeding stock and working oxen, surrounded by trees to break the cold N.E. winds.

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Along the sheltered valley of the Sergoit river, a couple of hundred feet below, formerly teeming with lion and leopard nearly 50 acres of coffee have now been planted. Coffee bushes in this district, if not shaded, assume a pyramidal shape and shew by their yellow-green colour that they feel the strong sunshine. Colonel Home regrets the costly clearing of the mature flat-topped thorn trees that crowded this sultry protected vale in its virgin state and is to-day preserving and planting coffee under them, as he extends operations. Of the undulating, lightly timbered savannah, which forms by far the greater area of the estate, wide stretches are arable; and even coffee is being tested on it on a small scale. Few estates in Kenya have taken up development of the flax business more seriously than Soy; and, its endeavours have been rewarded with all the trials of Job. During the war, and in Colonel Home's absence, a large shed full of highly valuable flax straw and the big factory itself were burnt down. Heavy sums were expended in developmental work that has since proved unnecessary. The farm cannot be called a first-class flax producer, the estimated average yield of cleaned fibre being a ton between 10 to 15 acres according to season. Commodious retting tanks have been built close to the fine springs that form a feature of the estate, but to-day dew-retting is preferred. In spite of the discouragements this industry has experienced the management has not entirely lost hope of this crop; though the mirage of fabulous returns has gone never to return.

The Staple Crop.

The main crop of Soy, as with many neighbouring estates in this part of the Colony, will probably be always maize, which returns an average of 8 bags to the acre. Some wheat is grown here but the tendency to rust makes it a risky crop. Though an endemic East Coast fever country, cattle do well here when dipped. In the early days of settlement the somewhat rash venture of importing purebred merino sheep was undertaken before the pasture had been rendered suitable for this class of stock by heavy feeding down. This valuable flock all died; but the time is now not far distant when, with care and paddocking, success might reward renewed attention to this class of husbandry. The arable lands of Soy are sweet, fertile and easily cultivated and they have been proved, in addition to the crops already mentioned, for potatoes, barley and oats. That it is a district which has in the past carried a numerous native population and vast herds of cattle is testified by the many stone-built bomas of the Sirikwa, an extinct race, clearly of superior intelligence to contemporary natives, which must have existed only two or three hundred years ago; and was probably harried to death by the predatory pastoral tribes now living barbarously in the locality. In all, Soy estates have 800 acres under general cultivation and 70 acres of coffee. Hail-storms have done occasional damage to the latter crop.

(g) Trans Nzoia within the radius of Mount Elgon.

Twenty-seven miles north of Soy, forty-five from Eldoret and one hundred and five from Londiani railway station is the township of Kitale, business centre to the Trans Nzoia.

Carried thither by the mail motor-car service of Messrs. O'Shea and Co., which enters for passengers, and leaves Eldoret at 10·30 a.m., I crossed the Nzoia river about midday, into a land of rich pasture and scattered, stunted

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further, possibly averaging ten to twenty trees to the acre.

The main road passes this very considerable stream some distance to the east of Mr. S. O. Hemsted's coffee farm; and the undulating, heavily grassed, lightly bushed country one plunges into on its further side is largely a repetition of the type of land upon which this settler is making so conspicuous a success of coffee and maize. A rich, red, sandy loam, due to granitic underlay, the soil which is stoneless is very deep in valleys and slopes. Upon this a rainfall of about 50 inches combined with an elevation averaging 6,000 ft., ensures all the essentials favourable to rapid growth and heavy production.

Along a smooth switch-back track the motor-car hummed cheerfully through Hoey's Bridge with its store and post office stationed on the river at the entrance to this great province; an area entirely different in many important respects from the great Plateau on which the occupants of the mail were turning their backs.

A feature of the roads in the Trans Nzoia is its sensible parallel double-track system; one being for motor-cars and the second for heavy wagon traffic. Native drivers seem to have grasped this plan thoroughly; with the result that while one track is churned up by the labours of draught-oxen and the vehicles that do the transport work of this country side, the other is worn flat and smooth from the constant passage of rubber-tyred conveyances; and remains in excellent condition at all seasons.

As one proceeds into the heart of this fine country glimpses of cultivated patches and paddocks, generally somewhere near settler's houses, catch the eye and prove that, though only opened up during the last few years, energetic efforts are being made toward adequate production. The ex-soldier land settlement scheme belonging to the last four years has however given Trans Nzoia its main impetus; and a white population of close on 400 men, women and children is at the present time, living north of the Nzoia.

At length the mail car pulled up in front of the verandah behind which is conducted the business of the Kitale stores and post office and the passengers were at liberty to descend and look about them.

The traveller in this part of the world learns to realise, as soon as he gets up to the Uasin Gishu plateau, that the country in this section of Kenya has completely broken away both from the sphere of the great mountain which gives the Colony its name and also that of its snow capped sister, Kilimanjaro. Here in the Trans Nzoia one feels more than ever that one is beyond the radius of those two mighty physical features that dominate, nearer the coast, so large a portion of East Africa. On the contrary a new influence steadily makes itself felt as one crossed the plateau northward into this province. Mount Elgon looms ever bigger and more important until at Kitale it bursts upon one full-size and at great length.

Range behind Range.

This new born township, in fact lies almost exactly, not only in the centre of the Trans Nzoia province, but half way between those two immense, elevated areas, Mount Elgon and the Charengani Mountains respectively west and east. As I write the latter lie clear and bright before me, range behind range, with a haze as of the blue Alsatian mountains over their distant bulk; and I can count no less than six ridges running parallel with each other in their contour.

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But the great dominating land mark of all this countryside is Elgon. I have failed to procure exact figures but am inclined to estimate its total length, from the earliest emergence of its southern beginning to its final disappearance into the northern plains leading towards the Abyssinian border at about one hundred miles. Yet it is disappointing as a mountain; for it has little in common with the conventional idea of vast accumulations of primary rock, sheer precipices, and stark masses of perpendicular crags. Rather it resembles an extensive, fertile diversified province of pasture, arable land and forest, not dissimilar at a distance to the counties lying between the outskirts of London across to Bristol, if one could imagine them propped up by some gigantic superhuman agency, with half of Hampshire for apex, upon the skyline of which a few blunt Welsh mountains and the pyramids of Egypt have been placed artistically, with the Needles and John O'Groats stuck in as solitary adornments at the uttermost northern end. Elgon is a mere 8,000 ft. above Kitale; and the panorama it affords the township, about 25 miles from its foothills, is a fascinating one. Snow seldom remains long upon its extended summits. On the other side of this great mountain lies the Protectorate of Uganda.

An opportunity occurring, during my short stay in the Trans Nzoia, to get as far as the lower slopes of Mount Elgon I was enabled to take a survey of this rich countryside from a place of vantage far above the level of the undulating parklike savannah.

To reach this point my conductor led his party across that ancient highway of sorrow, known as the Karamoja road, along which for centuries the slave trade to Abyssinia ebbed and flowed, with its continuous succession of human tragedy and suffering. This track, if it could speak might very simply explain what happened to many now extinct tribes, such as the Sirikwa, whose stone edifices and cleared land are found in abundance and add a spice of mystery to the modern occupations of white pioneers in these neighbourhoods.

Our party also visited one of the celebrated caves of Mount Elgon, nearby; dug out possibly by prehistoric aborigines for the saline deposits in the lower strata of the mountain side. These have been used for ages past as refuges in which primitive men have sheltered from wild animals or savager humans; and where they have, in later times, penned their livestock, whether they happened to be four-legged animals or broken-spirited, apathetic slaves on march to the markets of the north.

All Elgon must have been submitted, at some time or other, to a sudden prolonged and dreadful churning and overwhelming by violent volcanic agency. For the geological formation is a wierd conglomeration of all sorts of rock, igneous and aqueous, from granite to sandstone; cemented together by lava or blue stone. Fossils of many kinds are numerous and the bones of mammalia are stuck indiscriminately through it all as if every kind of creature had been caught by earthquake and ardent eruption on a wholesale scale compared with which the devastation of Pompeii was a mere incident.

My sojourn in Bahati Hotel, Kitale, the snug little caravanserai of this township, coincided with the expected arrival of a well-known Nairobi dentist. Appointments to the number of forty-six had been made and distressed or worried looking individuals, anxious yet reluctant to take their seat in the chair of the modern inquisitor, thronged the hotel. But he tarried and dallied on his way.

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As time went on angry men and women who had push-biked or motored in from a radius of 40 or 50 miles invaded the verandah upon which I was engaged in trying to pen my impressions of the district and cast suspicious looks at me; until the imminence of bodily danger due to a tragic mistake in my identity impressed itself upon my mind.

I had almost determined, in self-protection, to borrow a pair of carpenters' pincers and design a conspicuous placard stating that although in no way related, by financial interests, profession or sanguinity with the missing dental operator, I was willing if desired to do my best to undertake extractions with what crude implements the hostel afforded. Fortunately this heraldry was not necessary. The hum of angry voices gradually subsided and I was able to pursue my literary labours unmolested.

There are two Kitale townships; one being the Government reserve, of several thousand acres, upon which stand, magnificently in their loneliness, the jail, the D.C.'s offices, and bungalows, and the police station. The Indian problem is responsible for the stagnation on this area. Meantime, to the immediate benefit of the district which otherwise would have been indefinitely kept from enjoying any civilised conveniences whatever while our statesmen temporise, a private township has sprung up alongside of it. On this tract of country nimble-minded civilian enterprise has been hard at work since June 1921; and, apart from the Hotel, very well-stocked, much patronised, busy general stores have been established. An excellent garage keeps the cars and motor-bikes of the neighbourhood in order; the National Bank of South Africa possesses a substantially built branch upon it; a saw-mill is at work; wheelwright and smithy jobs are undertaken, even waggons being built; a butcher's shop supplies the meat requirements of the neighbourhood; and brickworks make an excellent building material for house construction.

Several series of town plots have been surveyed and are now on the market; including business, residential and market-gardening plots, from one to ten acres in extent. In addition, the Kitale Estates Company, which controls this useful undertaking, has a further six thousand acres alongside suitable for sub-division into hundred acre farms; all on permanent streams and nearly every acre of which is capable of growing coffee.

Future Promise.

Every essential for a fine city exists here. Broad, healthy, gentle slopes at an elevation just above six thousand feet overlook the spacious fertile countryside with its background of mountains on both sides. And the rate of rural development gives every promise of a local prosperity within a few years that must ensure a flourishing centre capable of fulfilling the desire of the settlers to become a thoroughly self-contained and self-centred countryside.

All through the Trans Nzoia the problem of building material is solved by the remarkable suitability of the sub-soil for brick making; and every turf beneath one's feet represents a few hodfuls of this useful, necessary class of ammunition.

The settlers themselves, as a community, probably possess a higher average of initiative and industry than any other in Kenya Colony. It must be remembered that, with perhaps the exception of a dozen farms previously taken up, this district was virgin country six years ago. Neither should the enormous distance from the railway—over one hundred miles—be forgotten and all it means to the man who has much of his equipment, food, seed, plants and domestic goods to be hauled thereon.

Amongst the farms I was able to visit a notable property was that of

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Messrs. Machin and Grant, who by sheer driving energy wisely backed by carefully expended capital, have been able to get 300 to 400 acres under cultivation, of which 85 are already in coffee, in the last eighteen months. Another that it was a pleasure to inspect belonged to Mr. D. A. Johnston, who is the oldest settler in the Trans-Nzoia, having reached it in 1913.

Here again a considerable amount of cultivation has been started, of which much is under coffee, on his own and his brother's farms. Also they have much other development and experimental work to show in the shape of solid house construction, fruit, vines and utility tree planting. This gentleman happened to be going next day to see some farms on the Trans-Nzoia plains in which he is interested and kindly took me along with him.

These so-called plains consist of entirely open, rolling country that has lost its timber within the last century from heavy stocking and grass-fire burning by natives, probably the Suk.

The result of what has doubtless been a seasonal concentration of cattle in the past has been very beneficial to the present European settler; for, though he has to contend with stumps in breaking up the land, the main labour of clearing has already been accomplished and the land is ready for the plough. Being rich soil in a good 50-inch rainfall belt, much of it is suitable for maize, wheat and coffee.

The properties owned by the Johnstons seem to comprise the last of the purely grass plains; for beyond them scrub begins to show itself and interfere correspondingly with grazing and cultivation, though it is doubtless also good land. In the distance northwards the country falls gradually to the hotter and more arid Suk reserve. A vast amount of game depastures on this area, from lion and giraffe downwards, even elephant appearing from time to time; and it is unusual to make this trip without encountering troops and herds of all sorts of big game.

From the verandah of a newly built permanent residence, all made from local materials, where we lunched, it was possible through field-glasses to see the homestead of General Baker Carr; whose enterprises in the nature of stock-raising, dairying, saw-milling, etc., on a very large scale, fittingly occupy the most northerly area of European development, in the Trans-Nzoia. The estate lies under the right wing of Mount Elgon and is perhaps one of the most distant from the line in the whole of Kenya; yet a considerable export in cheeses to India and elsewhere has already been commenced.

An interesting interview on the progress of this district was granted me by the manager of the National Bank of South Africa at Kitale; and I have also to thank this gentleman for material assistance in getting about the countryside, as he kindly placed his car at my disposal.

He recorded yields of maize up to twenty-four bags to the acre that had come to his notice and estimates the average actually at 15 bags in normal seasons. But to meet all contingencies of occasional slight deficiencies in rainfall, cultivation, etc., he advised me to quote the conservative estimate of 12 bags per acre for this country. He also stated that he believes there are 5,000 acres now planted to coffee in the Trans-Nzoia.

The District Commissioner.

I called, before leaving this pleasant countryside, on the District Commissioner who everyone praised as being an official of exceptional ability, industry and commonsense. At the time of my visit he was probing an interesting society scandal amongst the local natives. The culprit concerned in the temporary abduction of another man's wife was on trial; and I was able to

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watch for an hour the careful dispensation of justice which culminated in the loss of an ox to this sable Don Juan. The injured husband promptly made off with the co-respondent and the woman concerned for the purpose of feasting on the unfortunate animal. Could the golden rule be more practically obeyed even in our most altruistic Christian circles?

Only those who have to live in close administrative contact with Colonial Department officials in out-of-the-way places can properly appreciate a man who takes a sympathetic and practical interest in the troubles and hardships of the pioneer and does what is in has power to smooth his incidental difficulties with fair play and expedition. The present D.C. is popular both with white men, whose requirements he studies, and with natives, who have a high opinion of his justice, integrity and kindness. It is unnecessary to say more; except that he is also busily beautifying the Government township with tree planting and avenues.

Of the ex-soldier settlers it may be said that, though some of them are inexperienced and would have been far abler men had they had three or four years jackarooing on an Australian farm, they are mostly triers and a high proportion show indications of making good. All of them have, however, had far more land given out to them than they can fully develop within the next ten years.

I came across one man whose boast was that he gets by every post, and reads, about twenty magazines; and that he writes over that number of letters for each outgoing mail. He is undoubtedly an exception. One might venture the opinion that not much wise development or personal direction can be going on on his farm and that he is not likely ever to be a prominent producer or a profitable settler to the colony.

One of the most interesting personalities and go-ahead members of the community is Mr. Moresby-White, the able manager of the store and connected with several other enterprises including the development of his ex-soldier farm. His partner in several ventures is Mr. J. B. Steyn, chief shareholder of the Kitale Estates, a practical South African who is able, as few men are, to estimate the potential value both of the country and its climate to Europeans.

He is a man who has taken part in every African campaign from boyhood up; and also served for some time on the French front during the German war. After being seriously ill in the Transvaal from sunstroke he came here and found an equable climate without extremes that has suited his health remarkably well. In his earlier days of settlement in the Trans Nzoia he had a hard struggle to keep going, for he arrived in the country with practically no capital. For years he earned his living riding transport and driving his own teams between this distant district and Londiani through all sorts of weathers and roads.

His deliberate verdict of the climate is that for anyone who will follow an active, sensible and reasonably abstemious life, there is no healthier in Africa. Certainly his own appearance supports his belief; and though fever is said to have been caught by some of the earlier settlers here and may still exist, I personally came across no cases or first-hand evidences of it. All the upland homestead sites seemed perfectly healthy; but doubtless those who like to look for this scourge, or invite it by sleeping unprotected in sheltered valleys alongside creeks and waterholes may become infected.

One cannot examine the Trans Nzoia, Elgon and Chuyungani districts without forming the conclusion that they comprise some of the

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most fertile and easily developable areas in the British Empire. The administration might in this countryside have found farms for three, four or five times the number of ex-soldiers that have been granted land here; and very much increased the rate of progress as well as the social and co-operative possibilities of the community by so doing.

No Better Place.

It is no exaggeration to say that there is not a place in Africa where men would have a better chance of prospering on a comparatively small outlay applied to a 300-acre farm than in this neighbourhood; provided the land had been allotted free under strict development and residential conditions. Somewhere here the ill-fated Swedish scheme was at one time to be established. Coffee and maize are the main crops, but some years will probably elapse before even an average of 50 acres of the former and 100 acres of the latter are grown on the farms of 1,000 to 1,500 acres given out here. Yet by trebling or quadrupling the white-man power this amount of cultivation might have been easily secured in a district that is one of the most ideal for easy home-making, into which mankind has penetrated since the Garden of Eden.

The Trans Nzoia should have become already a reservoir and pillar of European population, ideals, and life in Kenya, had it been handled right; and a very tower of strength in times of trouble or political unrest. To-day there are 400 whites of all ages and both sexes on the Trans Nzoia; and the process of subdividing the farms is taking place as rapidly as purchasers can be found. But this in private hands and under a grasping commercialism is naturally a slower process than if handled by a wise administration with a view to speeding up production and strengthening primarily our essential white population.

Besides, one deleterious effect of giving out too much land to favoured individuals is to wean them from the ideal of becming single-minded producers and cultivators and turn them into financiers, land agents or speculators, whose main harvest is from the needs of their less fortunate fellow countrymen. Those with more land than they know what to do with are asking already from £2 to £8 and £10 per acre, according to position for what only recently was handed out to them in wholesale junks free; and with perhaps the lightest development and residential conditions to be found in the Empire, attached thereto.

(h) Back Across the Plateau to Londiani.

It was with some reluctance that I took my seat in one of the Pioneer Garage's Hupmobiles and turned my back on Eldoret for the long road that leads to the railway station of Londiani.

Hospitable residents and landowners had kept me constantly on the move during the two or three weeks it had been my good fortune to stay in this great district and its contiguous provinces. Yet my travels only made it apparent that with so great a variety of soils and climates and so wide a choice of economic products suited to the settler's arable lands, my time had been all too short to fully realise the potentialities now being unfolded by this province's first generation of pioneers.

Eldoret may not be an Eldorado in the sense that gold can be picked up in its streets; but it is the centre of a countryside capable of turning out an amazing quantity of golden grain and other necessaries of human life; and the future of such an area is far more secure and serene than that of any mining district town, seared and distracted by the temporary fever of mineral production.

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To the writer an added interest in the Uasin Gishu has existed for many years from the knowledge that a determined attempt was made, early in the history of British East Africa to present this great empty province through the "I. T. O." which controls the Zionist movement, to the Jewish refugees and political aspirants of Russia. Only by the incomprehensible refusal of the Commission, sent out to examine this rich territory for the I. T. O., to recommend acceptance of what was in reality a gift upon which a valuation of millions of pounds could reasonably be put in the near future, was Africa spared the infliction of an invasion that might have introduced all the modern shibboleths of Bolshevism and Russian terrorism here. Foiled in this attempt to do the British race out of its heritage in Africa, the same influences, ignoring their primary trusteeship for the working, sweating, unprivileged whiteman who is the soul of civilisation in coloured countries, are now busy declaring and materialising their new principle "Africa for the Africans and Indians."

No good purpose can be served in this place by dwelling on the Home Government's historic gaucheries; but one may however be permitted to regret lost chances for minuter observation of the district's potentialities. It is a trite saying that there is usually something new to learn on every farm. I have personally become convinced also that months might be usefully spent in many Kenya areas.

Dutch East Africans.

The car purred out of the township's western side in which most of the Dutch South Africans congregate and where their small unpretentious chapels bear witness to their traditional piety, even in a new and traditionless land.

It may be apposite to say something here about this interesting acclimatised white African race, so closely allied to us by blood and forming to-day part and parcel of the white citizens of the British Empire's African dominions. Indeed it would be a serious omission, in any account of this part of Kenya, not to mention them; for they form a very considerable proportion of the Plateau's white population.

To my thinking they are practically indistinguishable from that widespread type of whiteman comprised in the descendants of the original back-country Anglo-Saxon settlers of New England, Ontario, Australia and New Zealand. It is not until one hears them speak in the Taal to one another that the main distinction is apparent.

Though they are old-fashioned in some of their ways and ideas this is neither derogatory nor undesirable in an age which is suffering from an orgy of unsentimental thoughtless modernity and commercialism. Such an ingredient in the human element of a new country is an asset of very great value. Much of the hard monotonous labour of pioneering development in Kenya has been done by this people; from transport-riding and ploughing to general farm superintendence on behalf of absentee land-owners. Yet at the back of their minds seems always to be a spirit of serious independent judgment and mental reservation, as of a folk in the world but not carried away by it, which maintains and inspires a stalwart and wholesome individuality.

That many of them are simple living, literal Christians of the Plymouth Brethren kind, without however some of the latter's extremenesses, is surely not a point against them; especially in a colony which lays so much stress on the material side of life. Amongst a number even of the most robust males—and they are physical a big powerful folk—their decisions in life are largely ordered by spiritual or at least religious considerations,

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they appear quaint perhaps to those who have shaken off the old restraints and touchstones of even last generation.

These South-African Dutch are certainly, as a body, amongst the most *bonafide* settlers in the country. They are a home-making, family-rearing people who have burnt their boats behind them and mean to stay and see the colony grow into the fatherland of a white race. And their healthiness and that of their well-grown children—which is phenomenal—is a standing contradiction to the whine of our negativists and Jeremiahs that this cannot become a whiteman's country.

It is in fact one of the chief grievances against them, from the direction of some of our Malthus-ridden folk, that they have normally begotten, numerous families—as had the British only a generation ago—and succeed in rearing them under the Equator as well as they would in South Africa; notwithstanding wide-spread local prejudices and the serious handicaps on this score that parents labour under here owing to the indifference of a singularly unsympathetic community. Indeed the strong natural virility of this people is going to be an important factor, possibly the decisive one, in safeguarding Kenya from the several pernicious, artificial influences that threaten it as a white-man's home. Certainly the fecundity of the present type of British settler in Kenya will not count for much without them. It is indeed one of the most disheartening features noticeable in a survey of this colony to find so many of our finest stocks not even keeping up their numbers by natural increase.

The only other serious complaint I have heard against the Dutch—and their relations with the general colonist of British origin belong to that class of cordiality and co-operation which springs from a growing, mutual respect and understanding of one another—is that some of them are unprogressive and sit on their farms with a minimum of development and a maximum of leisure. Admittedly it would be far better for both the South Africans in question and Kenya Colony in general if those who are justly accused of this tendency were producers on a scale commensurate with their properties.

But surely the British section of the population is hardly the one to throw the first stone in this matter. At least these colonials have made their permanent homes on their farms and are bringing up Kenyan-born children who will exert an at present incalculable influence on the bias of this colony towards European civilisation.

Anyone who will take the trouble to tour Kenya will become aware of thousands of square miles, held by British people, with not merely a minimum but no development at all upon them; and on which neither white persons are living nor are any home-makers allowed to acquire them, except at extortionate profits to the present owners beyond the means of most would-be settlers. A fair question to put to my impartial readers is to ask which of these two classes of delinquents are doing less harm and serving the ideals of our political and racial aspirations more usefully under present critical conditions?

Over the great pampas of the Plateau the car sped southwards to the Londiani station through what appeared to be an almost illimitable expanse of pasture and wheat land; bounded on the east by the Algau mountains, beyond which is the break-away to the lower Molo country, perhaps twenty or thirty miles distant.

The whole area is too newly settled and too sparsely populated at present for any appreciable cultivation to be met with—compared to the entire arable area that

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fields. A few snug homesteads, embowered in their trees, with some hundreds of acres of growing or standing grain are visible from time to time nearby or in the distance as one passes across this great prairie.

But one is impressed with the simplicity of the farming problems of this country and its cultivability over wide stretches; on which numerous thousand-acre paddocks of wheat, barley, rye and oats in the higher elevations, and maize in the lower, are easily possible. At one spot a farm was pointed out to me the owner of which has planted fruit on a fairly extensive scale and his peaches, plums and apples are already celebrated in Eldoret; so that side of farming has also not been entirely neglected.

The Burnt Forest.

For some miles we passed through anthill country, a giant pimple-marked area—but capable of being turned into grain-growing land someday—that must have played havoc with the wagons of the early pioneers before the track was cut—and indeed still does when wet weather makes the normal road impassable; a drawback which is still an annual feature of the province.

At length the great plain gradually merged into a more broken area as we reached the 7,000 ft. altitude and entered the rising elevation of the Burnt Forest district. Here is a rich stock and grain district so named because, ever since it has been known to living human beings, the vast, charred stumps and logs of great cedar trees bear witness to some fierce conflagration that took place here perhaps thirty, perhaps a hundred years or more ago, and entirely changed the face of the countryside.

In this trip through the sunshine of a fine, bracing morning from Eldoret to Londiani there passes in review choice samples characteristic of all the best country one has ever seen in temperate and sub-tropical lands belonging to other parts of the world. The grass plains might be a portion of Canada's Assiniboia prairie in August; or the Darling Downs of Queensland; or the pampas of Argentine cattle-rearing fame; and memories of both Salisbury Plain, England and the sheep fattening Canterbury Plains of New Zealand in their earlier days, float before one's eyes in transit.

Once the Burnt Forest had been negotiated, with its remarkable similitude to Gippsland or Tasmania during the pioneering and clearing stages of those virgin sylvan portions of the Australian Commonwealth, and the 9,000 ft. point attained, the car entered a radically different country again. Here we began to catch sight of, and pass, half-finished embankments of the new railway; the deep red earth a pleasant contrast against bold sweeps, rounded slopes and cool lush verdure of naturally demarcated fields, edged and subdivided by extensive coppices or woodlands, as in Berkshire or along the Sussex Downs.

Then into pretty fern-like bamboo scrub, backed by tall cedars and lined with blackberry brambles that might have come out of a Devonshire lane. Thence on again through miles of riotous, heavy evergreen forest—the haunt of leopard and many bush-loving animals—indistinguishable, reminiscently, in passing, from the great Atherton bush country of Queensland or Waikato backblocks.

In the chill atmosphere of 10,000 feet elevation one keenly feels the need of warmer clothing; and all the mature trees are decorated with long-growing druid's beards of floating, sage-green lichen kept fresh by the constant mists of cloudland that sweep across these hills; mists carried by an air so

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sharp and pure as that of the North Sea when it hits the Margate parade in May or June and forces the loiterer to turn up his collar and walk more briskly.

Of my fellow-travellers on this trip one, the South African driver, a fine specimen of robust manhood in perfect health, physical condition, and with a complexion like an English country lad's, came up to the Plateau with his family in 1905 as a child, and has not been away since. It was easy to see that hard work and plain living under supremely healthy conditions accounted for his vigour.

The other passenger was a young English ex-soldier who, having drawn a farm on the Nandi border in the London lottery, came out in due course to take possession. Though without any knowledge of oxen, transport-riding, or the African languages, he managed to acquire a cart and small team and actually drove up his belongings with the help of one native—a Nairobi house-boy—in wet weather, over a hundred miles to his farm. This was a really remarkable feat for an inexperienced London-bred lad. He is seriously and continuously developing his property and one feels sure his grit will see him through.

He made a cheerful, interesting companion for the journey; full of quiet enthusiasm for his new life and keenness about the beauty and strange variety of the surroundings in which he found himself living.

So at last we reached a point in the forest whence a large cup-like depression spread out in front of us. Across it ran a dark ribbon that proved to be the Uganda Railway, while a scattered group of roofs alongside the line at one point indicated the township of Londiani.

(i) Countryside with English Climate and Flowers.

When I reached Londiani via the Eldoret road the weather was perfect and the basin, in which lies the township and railway station, looked peacefully beautiful and verdant amongst its fringe of forest-clad hills, ridges and mountains in the setting sun.

The snug hostelry, yclept the Londiani Hotel, with its neat green lawns, flower-beds and protecting trees, possesses a homely character, more like some old-fashioned country inn in Devonshire than a colonial public-house; and is just the sort of place to attract the family man looking for quiet rest, pleasant country surroundings, and sweet cool air.

Indeed, if Londiani has an outstanding feature, compared with other numerous fine farming and residential districts of Kenya, it is in this quality of homeliness and suitability for family life. At its elevation averaging about 7,500 ft., there is an invigorating freshness in the air that stimulates a zest for life. People of a wide range of age—some are well over sixty—and experience of life in other parts of the world, who are settled here for good and all, speak well of the climate. But an even better witness than their spoken testimony is the colour in their cheeks, the healthy tint of skin and general appearance of physical well-being that might belong to the inhabitants of some noted old-country health resort.

That Londiani makes no empty boast of being a family district is proved by the fact that seventy children, nearly all of whom reside within three miles of the Station, were counted up at the end of the year as participants in the Xmas tree and other festivities of that season of good cheer and juvenile happiness. And one wonders

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what the Education Department is thinking about not to have started a school here long ago. So keen are the inhabitants for this advantage that several informed me they would be prepared to contribute materials or labour to build the necessary accommodation.

Most of the residents are child-lovers and the amount of voluntary, thoughtful work, and the number of presents contributed annually to the pleasant purpose of preparing for the youngsters of the neighbourhood a jolly Xmas is agreeably surprising; for it exceeds everything of wholesale self-sacrifice and unrequitable kindliness I have hitherto come across in the colony. Londiani may be proud both of its locally-born generation and the spirit in which it treats it; and East Africa will draw much of its white strength and vigour in coming years from the children being reared in the homes of this district.

When one looks at the map and studies the position of Londiani on the railway it is clear that a promising future awaits it as a recognised health resort for those living in hotter and more exacting climates further west towards the Lake. There is indeed no place on the line between it and Uganda, so readily available and so certain to effect physical benefit to men, women and children needing a complete change from tropical to bracing conditions.

Trout Fishing.

Those in the sister Protectorate coming east for climatic reasons will find all they can need in the way of totally different air, scenery and food at this spot. Of outdoor sport, apart from games, some shooting is to be obtained; but the most noteworthy attraction of this kind is undoubtedly the trout fishing, which promises to be by far the most accessible to the holiday maker in Kenya. The tennis courts of the hotel attract many of the residents after their day's work is done, and between 5 p.m. and sundown, form a rally point for the local population.

Owing to the energy of the East African Angling Association, both rainbow and brown trout have been introduced to most of the streams in the neighbourhood, even as far as Molo and Kedowa. For business men fond of this sport it will be possible to arrive by train and live within easy distance of the trout streams without any safari or camping-out work.

These advantages seem important features of the place and all the more so because the new Uasin Gishu railway threatens to subtract from it its former chief means of livelihood. The main industry of Londiani has hitherto been transport to the Plateau, its chief centre Eldoret and the districts of Soy and Trans Nzoia behind them. When the railroad from Nakuru through to the Turbo Valley is completed and running, this business must dwindle and die down to insignificant proportions.

Fortunately a discovery has been made that is likely to entirely revolutionise this sombre forecast of commercial retrogression. It has been found that by linking up the town with the new railway, which approaches to within 9 miles of Londiani on its way to the Plateau, some startling economies can be made for the colony. The integral importance of this connection is that, when constructed, haulage of all bulky up-country and Uganda produce consigned for export, such as maize, cotton, hides, sugar, etc., would go by an easy gradient round and not over, the great Mau escarpment, which, at the summit, is close on 9,000 ft.

At the present time, the average cost of hauling one ton one mile over the Mau from Londiani to Nakuru is 8.68 cents; whereas the

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carefully calculated cost of taking the same load round the proposed easier gradient is 7.19 cents per mile per ton. On goods traffic alone, basing the estimate on present figures, the saving will amount to Fls. 47,605 annually, and the corresponding economy resulting on passenger traffic should be Fls. 17,772.

Some further material advantages will occur if this link be built and, without overloading this statement with figures, may be briefly alluded to. For moving empty rolling stock coming to or from Kisumu to the other line a saving of 90 miles is effected, resulting in a gain of Fls. 21.66 per truck, while on each loaded vehicle a saving of Fls. 32.99 is made, as shewn by the costs of railway transport given on p. 25 of the Annual Report on the Uganda Railway.

It is estimated that at least £8,000 will be saved in cash annually to the revenues of the colony by the construction of this small section of the line (that will cost a capital expenditure of £75,000 and pay a return of over 10% p.a.). In addition the link means a considerable reduction in wear and tear on engines; and much highly expensive regrading and re-construction of viaducts on the present main line, which will shortly have to be undertaken if heavy traffic continues to go over the Mau, may be obviated.

The cost of maintenance of the latter stretch for 1920-21 was £194 12s. per mile, of which 71% is accounted for under the headings of "General Superintendence and Renewal of Permanent Way." With a reduced train service these items could be enormously cut. Notwithstanding this heavy running expense the maximum load an engine can pull is only 200 tons gross over this tremendous rise as against 270 tons on the proposed new route; or a permanent additional handicap on the haulage power of every engine of 35%.

These figures are so striking that one cannot help hoping Londiani will get its link soon and the colony the financial benefit of the easier gradient.

By far the biggest estate (25,000 acres) in the district is that of Lord Cranworth, now cut up between two or three flax syndicates, most of which, however, seem to be in difficulties. A trip round with the present resident of the homestead enabled me to inspect the modern, well-equipped posho and flour mill, belonging to this property, situated conveniently on the line, which turns out seven bags of maize meal and two to three of flour every hour. On the way back to the homestead we passed a small tannery in which some Indian fundis were busily making leather in a primitive, but apparently successful, way, with the aid of wattle and thorn bark grown on the estate.

A mass of flowering plants and creepers surrounded and covered the pretty house amongst which many well-known English favourites, including honeysuckle, were to be seen.

In spite of the slump in flax, this estate continues to quietly persist with this industry; for the fibre it produces is of very high quality, the last London returns being from £102 to £120 per ton. A spacious and beautiful piece of country is "Londiani Estates," of very diversified character and big possibilities.

Maji Muzuri.

In another direction from the hotel I went along the road, at present terribly cut up by the heavy contracting, north to the nearest point in the new line and then on to a pretty bush township near Eldama Ravine that might have

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ERRATUM.

Owing to an unfortunate transposition of type the rest of this description of the Londiani District will be found on pages 34, 85 and 86 from the words "The firm of Messrs. McGregor and Stephen, etc., to (d) Mile 568 U.R."

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been lifted bodily from Tasmania, Gippsland or North Island, New Zealand, called Maji Mazuri. The atmosphere of a great human enterprise, such as railway construction, always has a sense of bustle and activity about it that is much the same whether one runs into it on the C.P.R. of Canada, the Australian Trans-Continental or in Equatorial Africa. In this case the main centre of industry had already passed on. The great banks of red earth beyond the gigantic cuttings were practically finished and awaiting the coming of sleepers and rails. But Maji Mazuri is a picturesque, permanent and prosperous little forest village—thanks to the railway and the lumber business—and well worth a visit.

Londiani township is the least interesting and attractive part of the district it centres. But there are a few enterprising business white men in it. For example, the butchery, belonging to Mr. H. V. Borain, whose fine grade beef grown in the neighbourhood—one carcase weighing 923 lbs., was hanging up at the time of my call at this establishment—is becoming famous up and down the line and even as far as Uganda. I traced a remarkably well-flavoured, old-country type of pork sausage that was put before me at the hotel to this firm and learnt that its reputation for delicacies was also rapidly increasing. All sorts of meat, from salt beef and grade mutton, to pickled, dairy-fed pork or brawn, are obtainable from this establishment.

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CHAPTER VI.

The Broad Highway to Nyeri and thence via Nanuyuki across Laikipia to Thomson's Falls.

(a) The Route.

The prospect of a long journey through country one has never traversed before holds a charm that, to some people, can never stale. I, for one, am grateful to the cosmos out of which my consciousness was projected for this faculty of enjoyment in my make-up.

Life itself has fittingly enough been likened by innumerable scribes and seers to a perpetual pilgrimage. From childhood to old age the normal human being arises in the morning and automatically turns his mentality towards untrodden and unexplored mountain ranges, invitingly blue in the distance, behind which lies concealed the kingdom of unattained ambition and heart's desire. The vast bulk of mankind never reach that Beulah land. Year after year they toil on; and the mountains remain just as tantalisingly far away, as coolly blue, as beckoningly desirable at the end of each year as they were at its beginning; or if some favoured individuals do succeed in approaching them closely they find the foothills ever more formidable. It is given to but one or two to cross into their promised land and discover the arid plains of realisation taking the place of the formidable barriers that attainment, halloed by the ethereal blue of anticipatory achievement, has hitherto presented.

The secret of the charm that an experience, such as the trip to Nyeri and Nanyuki possesses, lies in its kinship, instinctively if subconsciously acknowledged by one's imagination, to life's pilgrimage. It was therefore with some elation that I took my seat at 9 a.m. one morning in a car of Messrs. Engelbrecht & Co.'s Hupmobile service at the door of the Motor Mart in Nairobi. For I knew well that during the next few hours of bright sunshine I should in one effort pass through glorious tree-besprinkled savannahs of green pasture, across great valleys hollowed out in past aeons by still existing streams, over high ranges, whose refractory kernels have successfully resisted the levelling influence of the ages, right into the never-never plain country beyond. If not literally, at any rate in spirit I was filled with the old enthusiasm embodied in the couplet:

"Then hey for boot and horse, lad and o'er the fields away,

"Young blood must run its course, lad, and every dog his day."

The Wayside.

And so I started in the only through service going up the great north road toward the Abyssinian frontier.

Through the northern environments of Nairobi, skirting east of the pretty Muthaiga suburb, down dale and up protracted hill slopes with Kyambu on the left and the broad Athi Plains to the right we gathered speed and rushed along cheerily. Native women carrying heavy bundles, dignified houseboys and troops of wild looking Kikuyu farm hands scuttled from the track at our hooting like flying fish before a shark. Stolid oxen and cumbrous wagons were feverishly urged to one side at our approach. A good road

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under foot and attractive diversified landscape on both sides led us rapidly along Nairobi's favourite joy-riding route in the direction of the Blue Posts of Thika, its most popular week-end resort. We whisked by John Boyes' fine shamba, where that restless spirit of Kenya's early days is with some difficulty accustoming himself to peaceful pursuits; then across papyrus swamps up the long rise that passes Kamiti Ranch into the first beginnings of the Ruiru sisal area.

The rising ground of Ruiru merges into Kyambu, or at least the native reserve behind it; and coffee comes into its own again there. But, near the track we followed, sisal and grazing are the two most likely sources of income making. On and on without a pause untired we glided still, negotiating in a breath the bridge across the Ruiru where the Nairobi Electric Lighting Co., has its works, and slipping into more savannah and sisal country; until at last after many turns and windings the car ran out into Thika township, where the only at present existent branch line of the Uganda Railway ends. A few minutes away from this one street of shanties yclept Indian dukas—with just one respectable looking, European-owned store in the whole place—we crossed the Thika river close to its big, noisy falls and ran into the shelter of the Blue Posts, the most famous country hotel and pleasure resort in Kenya; named doubtless after the historic Portsmouth hostelry, made famous in Captain Marryat's book "Peter Simple." This caravanserai occupies some acres of land between the junction of the Thika and the Chania; both comparatively big mountain streams, each possessing fine falls within a few minutes' walk and merging into the one river only 500 yards below the house. The triangular spit of land that forms the grounds of this pleasaunce has been beautifully ornamented by Nature and careful planting with a wealth of handsome foliage, consisting of choice trees, bushes, hedges and flowering plants. The entire course along the sylvan valley down from the Thika falls to the meeting of the waters and then up again to the Chania falls has been cleared for foot passage. Though many people do not make the round, apparently from sheer indifference to one of the most lovely pieces of water and woodland scenery in Africa, no lover of Nature should miss this short walk of about a mile along the narrow romantic path. To-day the water in the lower reaches has been permanently raised by the creation of a big dam some miles down-stream for the power scheme of the Thika Sisal Co., Ltd., and boating on a considerable scale is rendered possible. Only one boat is however at present available.

Beautiful in the sparkling sunshine and chequered shade of a fine day the surrounding of the Blue Posts are even more impressive on a clear moonlight night. One is lulled to sleep in the snug roundavels of this hotel by the continuous sound of rushing waters; sometimes resembling the wash of waves on a pebbly shore, at others rising and falling with a noticeable and mysterious cadence, through the still watches of the night.

At the time of my call here I was fortunate enough to meet one of the first pioneers of British East Africa in the person of Dr. Atkinson, who had recently come out in order to re-visit the colony he assisted materially in founding. This gentleman accompanied Lord Delamere on his first journey via Somaliland to Nakuru in 1895 and chose our leading pioneer's Njoro property as a likely spot for establishing a sheep and cattle ranch.

It is only when one is privileged to talk over those early

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with men who lived through them that it is possible to realise how little they had to guide them in important decisions like this; for none possessed any knowledge of the entirely strange conditions of these temperate equatorial highlands. Njoro proved useless at that period for the purposes in view for several important reasons, although in another twenty years from now it will probably be a great dairying country. Kenya settlers owe much to these old pioneers who began the laborious and heartbreaking task of collecting data and suffering experiences on which all the modern settlement of Kenya has since been based.

The Blue Posts is one of those rendezvous where, if you wait long enough, almost every person of note in, or of importance to, Kenya will eventually arrive. Motor-car services, however, do not usually give one time to confirm the truth of this dictum, and that of Messrs. Engelbrecht & Co. being much in demand, is no exception to this rule.

Immediately after lunch we took the road once more and were soon well away from Thika along the Fort Hall highway.

Thika is a fine rich district in itself and worthy of an adequate description. Sisal is king here. It pokes its sharp pointed broadswords up from all sorts of unexpected places. When it reaches that age, at about eight years, which corresponds to three score years and ten in the human life cycle, the pole presaging an early dissolution springs from its heart—a veritable flagstaff of capitulation to the inexorable death that awaits all living things—yet bearing a numerous and almost indestructible progeny of young bulbils on its branches. Coffee and maize also grow well at Thika on specially selected areas; but the tale of its potentialities would be too long for this chapter, and must be held over for later description.

With Kinangop sloping up to the shapeless mass of the Aberdares away to our left, and the Ithanga hills outlined against the sky to our right, those passengers who rode with me in Engelbrecht's two Hupmobiles through the hot afternoon towards Nyeri, found the dust of the much-worn road — a usual condition between rains—distinctly trying. Our faces assumed the appearance of ferocious red Indians and we were all glad when we had passed out of the great areas of sisal country, and the lower lying grass lands with their stunted park-like trees.

At Maragua river bridge, 35 miles from Blue Posts, reached after a long run down to the lowest level of this journey — somewhere about 4,000 feet elevation—we began a steady uphill ascent which led us through a tumbled stretch of boldly broken, red soil country, full of stupendous gulches that must have daunted many a newcomer in the first years of Nyeri land occupation. Here we came at length into the extensive boma of Fort Hall, abundantly planted with a great variety of Australian trees and Cupressus; all of which have, during the few years—ten to fifteen—since their establishment, achieved an impressive size and dignity that, in less forceful climate, could hardly be acquired under thirty years' growth.

Once our backs were turned on this admirably situated and important administrative centre, we switched around steep hillsides or up and down valleys, where dozens of Natives were engaged, seated on high, insecure-looking platforms, in guarding their abundant crops, now nearing the harvesting stage,

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from attack by birds and possibly baboons and wild pig.

At last we reached the table-land once more, amongst rolling hills and wide undulations of open country; and the great mountain of Kenya lay almost directly in front of us. The road wound through close-cropped grass lands composed of rich apparently unoccupied Kyambu-like coffee soil, allocated, it is said, to Kikuyu native reserve, although never used by this tribe before the advent of white men — and showing indications of having been, at no very distant time, heavy forest. This opinion was afterwards entirely corroborated by the experience of settlers at Nyeri who constantly come across great blind stumps of indestructible muhogo and cedar in the soil they are preparing for coffee and European crops.

Beautiful broad streams that remind one of New Zealand trout rivers ran deep down between the uplands. One of these the Gura, is the first in Kenya to which trout were introduced (1907). Another similar stream, the Chania, has also been stocked, but more recently.

At mile 91 the shapely, forest-crowned hill, from which Nyeri takes its name, came into sight. At 6 p.m., ninety six miles from Nairobi we entered the township (6,100 feet above sea-level) and pulled up before the White Rhino Hotel, prettily situated in a broad avenue of this finely laid out, but empty centre. The setting sun just gave me time, before the night closed down, for a stroll, through double rows of noble trees that impart to the surroundings an atmosphere reminiscent of some stately, century-old English country park.

Carefully avoiding the water furrow that flows cheerfully along most, if not all, the tree-clustered roads here, and is drawn from a mountain stream seven miles distant, I made my way safely back to the hotel for dinner. In lieu of human company at my table, I cogitated leisurely over the various combinations of sounds, meanings, and implications comprised in the six-stroke high-pressure collapsible catch-phrase that had, during the day, been seriously submitted to me as the coming motto of this quiet, out of the way spot — "So Nyeri and yet safari."

The continuation of the journey Nanyuki-wards was timed to begin at 9.30 a.m. next morning, from Messrs. Engelbrecht and Co.'s garage on a neighbouring ridge to that which carries the main township. Here I had the pleasure of a chat with this settler, one of those hard-working practical South Africans, who are to be found in every district of Kenya, and whose careers and achievements entirely disprove the conventional dictum that substantial capital and constant trips out of the colony, are essential to success and health here.

Mr. Engelbrecht, who, besides being the head of this important transport business, is to-day a considerable land-owner around Nyeri, and the father of a sturdy family of young Kenyans, was in happy mood. He had just been graciously granted permission by the administration to acquire the township plot from which his business has been operated for years past — and this after a long-drawn-out period of supplication and anxiety.

In any other white colony in the Empire, and as far as I know in any other country in the world not dominated by the anti-white reactionary sentimentalism of the professional governing classes of Britain, the authorities would be only too glad to expedite the establishment in any reasonable way of in-

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intelligent law-abiding Europeans diligent in their business. But Mr. Engelbrecht, wasting no thought on the hypothetical, was grateful for the sense of security at length attained—and there was something pathetic in this gratitude of a strong man long obstructed by artificial and d'lettante forces.

In a car chockful of passengers and luggage eager to cover the last lap to Nanyuki, we ran almost immediately out of the chocolate coffee land into a lightly and then a heavily bushed country. Along a sticky rutty road we passed on our left the track leading away to the A. farms of the Amboni ridge, entered an area that will make a fine dairying and arable farming district when cleared of scrub and emerged in due course into a vast stretch of open grass land— resembling a typical Orange Free State area—lying directly between Mount Kenya and the Aberdares and known as Cole's Plain, after its owner, the Hon. Berkeley Cole.

For eight or ten miles this plain of short, dry, sweet grazing—devoid at the time of our transit of either game or stock—continued. Finally the owner's homestead came into view on the right, and we trundled down a rocky and rugged track across a drift into bush country once more. The day was somewhat cloudy and I was glad of an overcoat; for a cold wind was blowing over the mighty but obtuse wedge of Kenya. Rain seemed imminent and this country gets more than surrounding areas of this essential, because it lies right in the way of the clouds that, once detached from the attractions of the colony's premier mountain, leap straight for the upland terraces, hills and forests of the Aberdares, thirty or forty miles away.

The character of the soil and vegetation having changed again, we found ourselves traversing at intervals a series of mountain streams—very suitable for trout—coming straight from Kenya. These brooks were low and those who have lived here during the past few years have never seen them so short of water. But the wet season is near; and in the nature of things an extra heavy fall of rain may reasonably be expected with perhaps floods that will render traffic to this far away countryside extremely difficult for months to come.

At length a drift in one of these streams brought us out into a wide expanse of slightly undulating open country, merging into illimitable plains to the left, where lie, somewhere in the distance beyond Laikipia, Thomson's Falls and Rumuruti. To the right stood out Kenya, nearer more glorious, and more impressive than ever, with its precipitous fang-like cone — resembling the strongly set diamond point in some gigantic cutting implement of the gods—a shining pinnacled iceberg in its coat of snow.

On rising land right in front of us lay the scattered buildings of Nanyuki's Silverbeck Hotel—almost the only indication of an embryo township—and our destination. Beyond this pleasant little hostelry and social centre for the neighbourhood, which a sojourn during the next few days was to prove both comfortable and well conducted, the track continues northwards indefinitely to the Abyssinian border. Later in the day I strolled down to a bridge traversing the next trout stream, the Nanyuki river itself. There a finger-post pointed onwards, bearing the inscription—"Isiolo Quarantine Station 55 miles; Meru 81 miles; Archer's Post—(the blank in lieu of mileage being ominous)

In the distance could be seen the Loldaiga Hills that lie across this route, challenging investigation; while the far-famed beauty and fas-

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...ity of Meru urged a continued advance. So, even though I had come all this long way of 137 miles, materialising a previously almost mythical Nanyuki, the mountains still beckoned to further effort and more distant pastures, through the sign-posts of the R.E.A. Automobile Association set up in the these far distances by its indefatigable secretary, Mr. Galton-Fenzi.

In closing my account of this journey let me pay homage where homage is due. I have already travelled extensively in Kenya, but have never been able to get beyond the distribution of those little white boards, with their plain black lettering that indicate, for all to read, the routes lying still ahead. I have never yet come across Mr. Galton-Fenzi, but he looms ever larger in my mind, a Napoleonic figure, whose omnipresence in the land becomes overwhelming. Go to the uttermost parts of Kenya and he has been there before you; his boards under his arm; and doubtless upon his lips an imperious demand to the bewildered local natives for poles to stick them on. If this tireless personality were given full rein I can well imagine that within a few years one might ride on the horns of the morning and flit round the world till one were dead, without getting away from his invaluable signboards. That task completed, like an Alexander looking for fresh worlds to conquer, he will be considering a direction system for the earth's aeroplanes through celestial space and down the "Milky Way."

(b) Nyeri.

Scantily populated, with only a small area open to European settlement and far away as Nyeri is at present from the main routes of even Kenyan human traffic, it was nevertheless with some confidence of an interesting and informative visit that I ventured into this district. It had long come to my knowledge that several Australians and other Colonials were to be found there; and wherever typical, practical members of the overseas white world have settled, one can usually be certain of getting hold of facts and comparisons that will stand the test of serious enquiry or may be relied upon for usefully guiding the newcomer.

Nor was I disappointed. Mr. Twigg, who hospitably entertained me during my stay, lived and worked in the Westralian bush from boyhood for 16 or 17 years, prior to coming to Kenya. He was one of the early pioneers of the Coolgardi goldfields to which he tramped; trundling his belongings in a home-made wheelbarrow across the hundreds of miles of barren, waterless desert. His estate, Kilimara, lies only five or six miles east of the township via steeply undulating open country over a good fine weather road that passes across two beautiful coffee farms, firstly of Mr. MacDougall, and subsequently that of Messrs. Carbery and Trench. As we bowled along the charming homestead of Mr. Maxwell was also well in sight, on an adjacent noble hill south of a river called, I understand, the Tana. It is not, however, the better known stream of that name, though both rise in the Aberdares.

Mr. J. H. Twigg's property has an area of 900 acres with 175 under coffee; for which, indeed, practically the whole of the farm is suited. The homestead, one of the most comfortable and solid in Kenya, stands at an elevation of 6,100 ft. above sea-level. A full-length view of Kenya is obtained from its deep verandah. The house is embowered in well-grown trees; a green lawn approach has been created in front while flower gardens, tastefully decorated with a variety of ornamental plants —among which Westralian ever-lastings are prominent—flank it on the left.

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General P. Polovtsoff, at one time during the war Governor of Petrograd, was sleeping partner in this splendid estate. But the exigencies of the Russian revolution caused him to sever his connection with the enterprise; and, anyway, all the developments, from the cool, capacious stone residence to putting the last coffee plant *in situ* are the work of Mr. Twigg.

There are few places in the wide and varied world where a visitor—especially with Australian sympathies—can get so frank a welcome and so wide a selection of changing entertainment. The experiences of a seasoned pioneer who left his public school and the Old Country at 14 or 15 years of age and imbibed in early adolescence the spirit—it is extremely doubtful if it can be absorbed later—of those "men of a million acres, the sons of the Golden South," while engaged in opening up for the rest the wide spaces of half a continent, are always worth listening to.

But time did not permit me to do more than sample the fund of practical achievement and wisdom that my host has drawn direct from Nature. Too many enticing distractions were at my disposal; amongst which counted by no means least a fine selection of literature on live subjects and modern colonial matters. In addition were the pleasures of visiting hospitable neighbours; the collecting of data concerning the running of this and other well-managed coffee estates; and the making of excursions further afield.

There will long remain in my memory the incidents of a day's trout fishing on the Gura and a few hours spent amongst the A farmers on the Amboni Ridge, with their compact little properties of about 160 acres each. Then at evening when the spirit moved the lady of the house to face the piano, song and dance brought a delightful interlude of amusement to break the sequence of serious thought over financial, political and land development problems.

No better example could be found that the only ingredients required in Kenya to make it pre-eminent for cheery homes, are human aptitude therefor, jollity and natural kindliness. With the right spirit animating all concerned, it is just as easy, and probably more so, to build a happy fireside clime for weans and wife under the Equator as in the bleak, murky, sub-arctic conditions of the far northern hemisphere.

Maxwelton.

Across the river at Maxwelton is just such a home again, where the hospitable Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell with their young family live in a picturesque, castle-like residence amongst beautiful surroundings. This property is only 160 acres in extent; and is a standing example that, even in the times when far bigger areas were being given out as supposedly necessary for a man to start on, a determined, practical settler could with little or no capital keep going and make good on a small acreage. This planter has been on his property 18 years—the two last seasons being the driest on record—and to-day has 80 acres of coffee in bearing, which average 10 cwt. clean coffee per acre.

As best Nyeri coffee fetched gross last year about £118 per ton—I understand from Mr. Twigg's factory—it will be seen that quite a considerable income may be made off this area if working expenses be kept down. Mr. Maxwell is his own manger and running costs are correspondingly low, for he is a good, painstaking farmer. He has adopted the double-stemmed system of pruning or shaping his bushes and likes it. A furrow enables him to apply water anywhere he thinks necessary; but is not used as much

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as one would expect, the usual rainfall, which includes four months of soaking night mist, being sufficient.

A continuous series of experiments in acclimatisation has been carried on here. To-day one may see growing pecan-nut, citrus, olives, plums, peaches and apples in the orchard; and 200 varieties of ornamental trees and bushes in the gardens surrounding the stone house, with its two-storied tower which possesses a flat roof where one may sleep fearlessly in the open during fine weather.

To-day Mr. Maxwell, having prospered, is buying more land at Nyeri; which points the right, and only sound, policy of land settlement a young country like this should employ. Let a newcomer prove himself a success on a small acreage, without being permitted to monopolise a large area—in the hope that he may do well some day—to the obstruction of later comers and the serious injury of local trade interests. Then let him buy whatever more land he may require in the open market. Even in Britain, after a thousand years of occupation, constant change of ownership by sale goes on, according to the waxing or waning fortunes of families or individuals, based on their intrinsic industry. Kenya wants white population and plenty of it; not the princely endowment of a few favoured persons, with what is in reality the main public asset, in areas which they frequently cannot or do not use fully.

Maxwelton is the show small property of Kenya Colony; and I should not be surprised if the nett returns on its 80 acres of mature coffee are between £2,000 and £3,000 per annum. It is, in present hands, quite capable of making the latter figure.

A curious sidelight into the changes that have for ever been taking place in Africa is obtained from Mr. Maxwell, who states that since he first remembers now open Nyeri, though it is a true timber country, hundreds of thousands of acres have been cleared of forest by the natives. Under normal conditions of the ante-whitemen era after a few years of their primitive cultivation or pastoral occupation, the African would move on somewhere elsewhere and allow the forest to take possession again for a few generations. The aboriginal races of Africa are all migratory in habit; and their wasteful methods of burning and using up a countryside combined with war and cumulative diseases necessitate a complete change every few decades.

Probably the most extensive farming and planting operations around Nyeri are carried on by Messrs. Carbery and Trench, with 170 acres bearing, out of 260 under coffee. Begun only in 1916, immense development has taken place here that must indeed be seen to be believed. But there has been no lack of money behind the workers, which is an important desideratum; and Mr. de la Poer Trench, who was formerly the Colony's coffee expert, ought to know what he is about. Personally I was anxious to see this estate, for my experience of official farming or planting experts is that very few of them—if any—are themselves able to develop and manage land on cheap, sound, economic lines. You have usually to get back to the often despised practical man for this quality.

This property—which is hardly a fair test—is however a constant scene of bustle and activity and very much a successful going concern. A factory in solid stonework that has probably cost ten or twelve thousand pounds, fitted throughout with John Gordon's fine machinery, is easily able to treat 200 tons of coffee per annum. It can however at a push be worked day and night; for electric light is laid on

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where. I counted 31 belts working simultaneously in this great industrial building.

In the nursery half a million young coffee bushes were waiting to be planted out with the first rains, for it is the intention to bring the area up to 350 acres this year. A posho mill that grinds out 100 bags of maize meal per diem is working regularly and an ice and soda water factory is being started. The excellent price of £115 per ton was obtained last year for their cleaned coffee in London and £70 for light quality. Three white men are permanently employed here.

Pioneer Dangers.

Neighbouring both these last two estates is Mr. MacDougall's; one of the earliest settlers of Nyeri, with a nice area under coffee. Here a remarkable occurrence took place some years ago which illustrates the unexpected dangers that pioneers have had to face. Mr. MacDougall was entertaining one evening his neighbour, Mr. Maxwell, to a sundowner in his small original pioneer hut, on the door of which he had fixed a lock that shut automatically if pushed to, when his dog came rushing in pursued by a full-grown leopard.

During the instantaneous confusion that resulted the door banged. While the white men, hiding under whatever cover they could find, were making frantic efforts to open the door, the savage brute roamed around in a state of terror slashing at them with his powerful claws. Both men were severely mauled, Mr. Maxwell dangerously, before they succeeded in getting the beast out, for though they managed to open the door once or twice it slammed to again each time before the leopard could make its exit.

The day I spent on the Amboni ridge was a memorable one; for it showed how hopeful and energetic the right type of settler can be when his energies are directed to developing an area well within his compass, yet not so large as to raise expectations of wealth by land dealing. Compared to the great block of 40 square miles of first-class coffee country that the authorities have sequestered by the simple expedient of attaching it to the Kikuyu reserve—though prior to the White man's arrival this tribe never possessed it and indeed dared not venture upon it for fear of the predatory Masai and even now it is hardly used for grazing—the land of Amboni is patchy and inferior. Yet that does not mean that it is either bad or unfertile, for the land with which I contrast it is of superfine excellence; and, if settled by practical white men, could keep a family in great comfort—and probably 50 natives in constant educative work—on each 100 acres; making Nyeri one of the richest districts and townships in the colony.

The soil of Amboni ridge varies from grey-black or brown to chocolate and is being used both for general cropping and coffee planting. Most of this day's outing was spent on Major and Mrs. FitzGibbon's farm, where an excellent permanent house has been built on their 185-acre property. Already 10 acres are under coffee here, with 30 being prepared for the rains. At least another 80 are arable. Captain Dugnency, late of the Guards, who is a partner in the farm, has done most of the ploughing himself. Both men are out all day at their development work and Mrs. FitzGibbon, who is a clever, practical, charming Australian woman, assists them actively.

On the lines these settlers are planning the farm, combined with the atmosphere of goodwill and endeavour that pervades the whole place, one cannot fail to judge this an unusually select and desirable spot, even in Kenya. A perma-

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nent stream bounds the south side of the farm where many acres of rich irrigable market gardening and nursery land are being developed. Some five or six thousand pounds have been spent on this property—which sufficiently prove the seriousness of the occupants. Several other blocks, if of slightly less acreage, are much the same class of holding and all will make good homes and pleasant places of occupation. The climate is somewhat cooler and even better watered than Nyeri, for the ridge stands higher ensuring thereby splendid views of the neighbouring country and Kenya mountain.

Yet one marvels that so out-of-the way a spot, 120 miles from Nairobi, should have been chosen for A. farms when probably equally as good land might have been found along the existing railway. Certainly there is an amazing discrepancy between the six or seven thousand acre farm given to one ex-soldier on the line and almost in the township of Nakuru or the thousand-acre Fort Ternan farms and those of Amboni Ridge. In the writer's opinion the latter place, with its ample firewood, virgin maize land and good grazing would have made an attractive exchange for the Kikuyu who occupy the area, practically exhausted for their purposes, along the line between Kabete and Kikuyu. The native has little or no use for the railway; while it is the breath of life to the European producer, who by superior methods of cultivation is able to utilise profitably even discarded native lands. A railway is however expected to reach Nyeri within the next few years.

(c) A Day's Fishing on the Gura.

My host at Nyeri had promised me a day amongst the trout on the Gura, and as my visit ran its course I became more and more anxious lest the exigencies of plantation work or the lack of that essential effort, necessary to overcome the inertia of routine life, might rob me of this coveted experience.

But most things come to him who knows how to wait patiently and gracefully. So it happened one sunny morning we motored off with a cargo of fishing tackle, provisions and passengers, a fair wind in our backs, across the ten miles of empty, make-believe reserve, which constitutes probably the richest, most extensive patch of unutilised coffee land in the colony, towards the Gura. Away to our right in the distance lay the Italian mission, which, by-the-bye, owns about 4,000 acres of this very land.

Once out of the flatter area we speed up and down great slopes of fertile, hilly country, such as the Kikuyu loves, and which he is engaged in cultivating intensively in all directions. Until at last we entered a stupendous, Culebra-cut of a valley that has been cloven in the rich red soil and exuberant vegetation by countless ages of river attrition: the alluvial wash going down by innumerable floods to form the Tana River.

Finally a vivacious stream, brawling, and flickering white and blue over its stones, came into sight. In a few minutes the car crossed a rustic and by no means too secure a bridge to a boma on a river flat, where it is the custom for fishing parties to camp.

No time was wasted near this spot, for my companions—who had been there many a time before—knew that the average visitor fishes the shallows energetically within a mile or two of the camp; but frequently goes no further. So we migrated steadily upstream, accompanied by a horde of small

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two volunteers who we found at the camp waiting to carry the white man's belongings for him.

The full beauty of the spirited Gura river is not revealed until one reaches it and travels on foot along its banks. Then one realises that it is a peer to the finest trout streams of Ireland or New Zealand. Scraps of the poet's song about a similar stream thousands of miles away rose unbidden to my mind and seemed to fit in with extreme appositeness as I watched ripple and current chase each other over the clean round boulders to disappear in the placidity of deep pools. Did he not sing something very like this?

"I come from the haunt of the Kuke and palm, and make a sudden sally,

"I simulate deceptive calm, then royster down the valley."

My companions, loth to lose any chances, whipped the stream as they walked rapidly onwards in the direction of the Aberdares. But for some time they drew blanks; or their minnows and flies received only shy and tentative examination from experienced and suspicious fish. The anglers who formed our party were however all seasoned local enthusiasts, not easily daunted; who have often taken home after a day's sport on this same stream a catch of 50-lbs. apiece.

But though the weather conditions were favourable they wandered long, on this occasion, before they caught their first victim, an indication that other capable and energetic devotees to Isaac Walton's gentle art had but recently been assiduously at work. And when they reached the more promising, higher pools, I rested for a time under the shade of an umbrageous riverside tree; alternating my attention to their efforts by watching an ancient native who with ecstatic, anticipatory expression, was cutting sugar-cane for a coming beer carousal. What time, on the bank opposite, a dusky maiden, dressed only in banana leaves cut skilfully into a kirtle, kept a sharp look-out on me while hoeing the family food plot; retiring bashfully into the tall maize whenever my eyes chanced to wander in her direction.

At last the biting commenced in earnest and within an hour or so a succession of shining, wriggling, brown trout was brought to grass, the heaviest for the day turning the scale at exactly four pounds. Then came a welcome lunch interval; and after another hour or two's sport we slowly walked along the banks or waded through the clear stream, with its patchwork quilt of steep cultivated and grass-covered hills rising high on either side, whence many a keen native eye marked our slightest movements, back to our starting point. Our catch for the day numbered ten or twelve; and that night I feasted royally on the delicious flesh of this noble fish, to the accompaniment of anecdote and reminiscence, culled from all the world, in congenial and happy company.

With bedtime came the healthy, dreamless sleep that follows a day of pleasant physical exertion. But I did not permit the welcome eclipse of this restorative unconsciousness to overcome me before congratulating myself on one of the pleasantest experiences in a somewhat chequered career, much of the success of which was due to my host: whose skill with the rod combined with his bonhomie and excellent arrangements proved

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him to possess an unusual mastership of outdoor affairs.

I had indeed been under the guidance of one who had lived as a boy alongside some of the finest trout streams in the British Isles, who in adolescence had acquired the unrivalled skill of the Australian aborigine at bush tracking and fish spearing; and who, in his time, has been amongst the foremost professional big game hunters of East Africa. And many a rich man's trophy in London or New York of lion, rhino and buffalo, concerning the acquisition of which the owner tells harrowing anecdotes, really fell, if the whole truth were given to the ever ready and protecting rifle of this quiet, urbane, and and capable Kenya settler.

(d) Nanyuki.

"You seem to be a travelled man," said the involuntary companion with whom I was jammed, between all sorts of goods in the back seat of Engelbrecht's motor omnibus bound for Nanyuki, "did you ever come across an African named Oswald?"

We had been beguiling the journey for the last half an hour by conversing on all kinds of topics when the sad-faced stranger with whom I was coupled shot this unexpected question at me. I at once denied all implication and countered by enquiring what sort of a native was this closely named individual and where did he hail from?

"Ah," sighed my fellow passenger, "I don't know much about him except that when I last had authentic news he was a perfect little gent'eman. But that was thirty years ago."

"You should of course be told," he went on in a pensive sort of voice," that I was raised at the Marleywich Public School. It was a custom of my generation there that we supported and educated a little native boy in the African mission field, caught young from his mamma and papa and rescued from his normal fate of impenetrable, gloomy heathenism by contributions from our very restricted pocket money.

"For years my modest income was regularly docked for this cause; and many's the time I have stood hungrily outside the buttery, unable to participate in the delectable dough-nut during the ten minutes' interval, because of Oswald; who may of course have been enjoying bananas and coconut milk at the same moment. Year after year we were informed on special public days of rejoicing, how nicely he was getting on and improving under our administrations.

"I remember when he could use a knife and fork together with a table napkin as well as if it were one of my own most noted, private domestic, family incidents. Then he learnt to read and plunged headlong into the mazes of vulgar fractions. Up till the time came for me to leave school I never grudged him my contributions; and I often thought kindly and hopefully of him during my subsequent life in Canada. Now I am on a visit to Africa, my most pressing anxiety is to come across the little fellow of my boyhood who absorbed so much of my scarce cash; even though he may be grown up and is perhaps to day a wise and reverend seignior in his own country, shedding the light of his shining example and superior education amongst his benighted brothers and sisters. I feel I helped to make Oswald what he is, wherever he is; and for thirty years I have been looking forward to meeting him."

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Here the stranger fumbled in his pocket and eventually produced his card, with an Ontario address on it. "You will much oblige me," he added, as the Silverbeck Hotel hove in sight, "if you will send me word should you ever meet a native who answers to the name and fits the description I have given you of little Oswald."

The Nanyuki Silverbeck Hotel, with its snug bungalows and ample if simple accommodation, stands at an elevation of 6,400 feet on a rising bank of the open plain; which is really one with the great stretch of flat country reaching across Laikipia to Rumuruti. On the east is a close full-sized view of mighty Mount Kenya—as if in a neighbouring field—the forest slopes beginning only five or six miles from the back of the hotel; and within easy walking distance on either side are mountain streams, stocked alternately with brown and rainbow trout.

It was my good fortune to stay at this healthy, wind swept place for some time. And the more I saw of it the more it impressed me as an ideal spot for holiday making; whether one desires to indulge in the active pastime of hunting on the plains and in the adjoining hills—where every species of big game may be found—or merely seeks the benefit of cool, sweet, recuperative air, good food and restful days.

The hotel, which is ably and attractively managed by the proprietor, Lt.-Commander Hook, R.N.,—who also has established a garage and smithy alongside—lies right on the equator. Indeed this imaginary line is said to run through the Bar, so that it is possible to enjoy one's sundowner with a leg in either hemisphere. In front of the main building the naval instincts of the owner have caused him to erect a lookout or crow's nest; and no visitor is considered blooded to the district until he has made the somewhat rickety ascent and surveyed the surrounding country from this swaying eminence. Thence it is possible to see not merely the Loldaiga Hills, a fine sheep and cattle area only 15 miles off, but also the Lingishu Hills, nearly 60 miles north; these forming the last range before commences the great arid territory that lines between fertile Highland Kenya and the Abyssinian border, over four hundred miles away.

It is one of the unique attractions of the hotel that hardly a day passes without bringing along some traveller, out of this mysterious northern section of the colony, full of strange tales and dramatic happenings. Perchance the newcomer may be from the K.A.R. head-quarters at Meru, comparatively close by—for this boma is only 50 miles through the forest on the northern spur of Mount Kenya—who has been chased by elephant or rhino on his journey.

One man from this centre, which has the reputation of being of superfine fertility and beauty, but is reserved for Native occupation only, was treed for two hours by a herd of the former during my visit; the motor lorry he was driving being in serious jeopardy for a time as it was regarded with menacing suspicion by the angry leaders of the pachyderms. Or it may be a military man belonging to the frontier outposts who takes the honoured corner of the Bar at eventide and, sitting astride the equator, tells of treacherous Somalis in the far north-east or slave raiding attacks from across the border.

Day by day I managed an excursion in some new direction; returning usually in time for the nightly tales of these interesting folk. My first visit was to Mr. Raymond Hook near by his brother's hotel—they are both sons of the eminent Royal Academician—where an unusual originality in livestock and cultivation

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experiment was discovered. Here is to be found a fine flock of pure homer pigeons which the owner delights in training and testing, for they work excellently in their new surroundings.

Many different kinds of fruit, have been planted in the orchard; amongst which I noted a new, deep red variety of tree tomato. Twenty or thirty young pheasants were being reared in a special pen. A herd of Nubian milch goats were in evidence. And though the farm is mainly a first-class grazing proposition, good arable areas exist upon it; for I saw some creditable crops of flax, barley, wheat and oats either growing or in stack.

When lunch time came this settler informed me that we would go down to the Nanyuki stream hard by and catch a trout. On the way a water-driven posho mill was examined; and, though I must admit my mind was made up that my mid-day meal was likely to be an uninteresting affair, within a few minutes after reaching a fine shaded pool, a two-pound rainbow trout lay panting and scintillating on the turf. About a quarter of an hour later we were enjoying a meal fit for a fairy princess; for this fish is at its best when put straight into the frying pan.

An afternoon ride to the ribs of Mount Kenya followed. By gradual rises—through open country, then across a coppice strewn belt of park-like territory and finally into heavy cedar forest—we followed a jinker and wagon track until we came upon Mr. Lex Smith, an old acquaintance of the writer, camped alone deep amongst the stately timber, where he was logging for a local saw-mill. A stroll into a green dell or bangar of concentrated shade and verdure, in which the biggest trees in that neighbourhood might be viewed, a cup of tea, a handshake, and we were on our return journey again through this true elephant and colobus monkey land, with all our time cut out to get back before dark.

Another trip westward, 5½ miles into the plain country of West Kenya, took me to Mr. W. S. Bastard's hospitable homestead, called Line Farm (because it is on the equator) and possessing an elevation of 6,000ft. Indications that the long dry spell, which had enveloped all this part of Kenya during the previous few months, was nearing its end were apparent for showers were beginning to fall almost daily and a refreshing greenness was visible in every direction. Clouds assembled constantly with threatening aspect, so that one might have been amongst the stormy Hebrides rather than on the sun-encircled equator.

At this farm all the signs of exuberant abundance that one associates with an old-established country home are to be found. For Mr. Bastard, an old naval man is a very early Kenyan pioneer and has reached that period of life when he can enjoy the harvest of earlier years. He has formed the highest opinion of the healthiness of the climate and never wears a helmet. His sons are settled on neighbouring farms. A thousand head of cattle are run on this property; a deep verandahed comfortable house, all built of local materials, contains the owners and their visitors; and my memory goes back vividly to a mature garden in its primest period of annual production. A mass of colour from fuchsias, roses, gorse or whin and many another familiar bloom where flowers were cultivated and over-burdened with unpicked fruit in the orchard section. The average rainfall here is about 25 inches annually.

Merino Sheep.

Thence I journeyed onward to the delightful sheep run of Mr. Hitchings almost alongside and con-

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stocking of very similar stock country. Nature has been interfered with as little as possible on this property and the comfortable homestead buildings standing among indigenous trees are made entirely from the soil and grass of the run itself with timber from the slopes of Kenya. The owner of this estate is a single-minded pastoralist who, through good repute and ill, has stuck to his one line, namely, merino sheep.

To-day, after 19 years in the Colony and starting without capital, he derives a comfortable income from his high grade flock; and he hasn't even a cow or a hen on the place. But Mr. Hitchings was trained practically on some of the great sheep stations of Australia's back-blocks; and it is doubtful whether Kenya possesses a more experienced, shrewd and capable flock-master. The mortality on this run amongst the 2500 sheep depastured here has been reduced to a minimum during recent favourable years—for this variety of domestic animal loves dry, semi-drought conditions—but no doubt a very wet season would increase it somewhat.

The advice of this sturdy successful veteran—who might have stepped out of Cromwell's Ironsides—to would-be sheep farmers is as follows:—Buy only low-priced, suitable land; get everything you want for the farm off the property or do without until you can pay for it from wool returns; and give your flocks undivided personal attention. Mr. Hitchings entirely practices what he preaches. He has never bought an acre of land, and has made all his improvements off his sheep's backs. I spent a happy evening here exchanging Australian experiences and listening to the views on local stock and land matters of this wise and interesting settler, who expects in the near future to be shearing 5,000 sheep giving 5lbs. wool each. Thirty-six bales (12,000lbs.) went out to auction from his solid, practically built wool shed last season.

Next day I stayed with Captain Paice, perhaps the oldest settler round Nanyuki, who received me with frank, kindly hospitality. There I saw his brick-making plant—he supplies the whole district with this material—his dairy, piggery, and maize crop. A fine stand of irrigated lucerne was also growing near the solid brick house; indeed, this 3,000-acre property is one of the best general farms in the neighbourhood.

But the event of the year in sport-loving Nanyuki was at hand and it was a lucky chance that brought me here on the eve of the Gymkhana. For some weeks everybody's thoughts and energies had been concentrated on this occasion and with Captain Paice I saferied across the township to the charmingly situated race-course; which, though the youngest in Kenya, is by far the prettiest I have seen. Surrounded by cedar clumps and lying between two trout streams, it is yet open enough to receive plenty of breeze.

To the east lies the full length of Kenya in all its splendour and on the morning of our arrival on the course its great lava-cone pinnacle, together with tens of thousands of acres of the vast slopes supporting it, were covered with snow; for it had been raining heavily in the lower country. As one looked up at the sparkling, dazzling, spectacle against its background of azure sky, it was hard to believe the Equator was within a stone's throw.

The explorers who first told the world that ice and snow were to be found here were stigmatised by indignant wise-acres as liars of the first magnitude—even Livingstone throwing the weight of his reputation into the scale against them. What would they think to-day of the Royal East African Automobile Association's scheme for having

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winter sports all the year round on a frozen lake at an altitude of over 15,000 feet?

The buildings and grandstand of the Nanyuki course are rustic in architecture, but solidly built of cedar and in complete harmony with their surroundings. It was the design of the hospitable party of settlers with whom I chanced to find myself, to camp out on the ground and spend the three days of the Gymkhana in closest contact with the sports. No more charming way of participating in a race meeting could be imagined; and with the best of company and plenty of good cheer this period of outdoor life and amusement proved one of the jolliest it has been my good fortune ever to experience.

The first day was chiefly devoted to the Somali or Abyssinian pony; numbers of which are brought down annually to this neighbourhood by enterprising native dealers from the far North. There were in addition to scurry and point to point races for these, a motor-car trick race and a polo race. Polo is the favourite pastime in this pre-eminent stock country and a very good team is being got together from amongst the enthusiasts.

At night we conversed, exchanged reminiscences and went to bed early, rising fresh and energetic for a preliminary look round the stables before breakfast. My bachelor tent companion amused me by the solicitude he showed in getting his socks on right side out; evidently a somewhat unusual event. For, he explained, this was to him—in spite of long trousers—an invariable symbol that the occasion was an important one and he would feel the elation consequent on making the best of his appearance all day. I have sojourned for a time in other parts of the world with similar jovial company where it was the custom for the first up to be the best dressed—the laggard having to put on merely the united rejections of his more active companions. Nothing of this nature occurred at Nanyuki, however, and one's private clothing was strictly respected.

The second day was notable for a polo match between Nanyuki settlers and Meru military men; and for the hacks' competition which a beautiful, well-mannered, country-bred, grey mare easily won. A good show of mares and foals was also given. In the evening the main, if not the only, attraction was an ambitious play and concert presented by the local schoolmaster, a Dutchman named Mr. Bosman who for many years has had the commendable enterprise to run a private educational institution here where previously there had been none; but now receives some little subsidy from the Department.

Considering the young Dutch actors and contributors to this entertainment were all speaking in what was to them a foreign language, which many of them had only begun to learn a year before, their performance was a highly creditable one. A chat afterwards with the principal on the intellectual capacity of these white children, who had been born and reared in the country, elicited the opinion that the varied distractions of pioneer life are not conducive to concentration on book learning.

Mr. Bosman can discern no budding geniuses in his flock. But these youngsters look far above normal in size and physical development; and when children are growing fast, mentality is apt to take a secondary place for a time. Anyway, character formation, which is even more essentially important than mere book learning, is going on apace in the conditions under which these live; and after

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all, it is seldom that a teacher's favourite selection amongst his pupils is later on confirmed in the world by outstanding initiative, originality or even merit. These children are at any rate receiving better educational attention than did the first two or three generations of New Zealanders, Australians or Canadians.

The last day, which was devoted to various sports, including a motor car potato race, was chiefly notable for the cheeriness of our final dinner together. This ceremony was graced by the Provincial Commissioner, a genial soul cased in a massive frame, who allows the human warmth of his nature to be felt under the official glove; and, in his rare moments of repose during our conviviality reminded me of Barratt's mandarin in the Chinese Honeymoon.

(e) Across Laikipia to Thomson's Falls.

On Sunday morning after the Gymkhana I found myself marooned upon the Nanyuki racecourse humming "All are gone, the old familiar faces." My boon companions had at daybreak folded their tents like the Arabs and disappeared in the direction of their farms. Most of them belonged to the country north of Nanyuki, and would take a day or two to get back to their homes, situated at long distances from one another. But the produce, as indicated by fat oats and fine lucerne fed to their horses and excellent vegetables contributed to our temporary mess, proved the existence of rich red and black soils and irrigable areas where they came from. Nor are these distant homesteads so badly off for markets as one might suppose. Much of their produce goes to the military at Maru; and the entire country between them and the northern border, being arid and strictly pastoral or desert, they have the first chance of supplying that immense frontier with its agricultural requirements.

Fortunately my arrangements held good and I was not allowed long to experience that bleak sensation of loneliness which was doubtless Robinson Crusoe's chief bugbear on his well-stocked island. By ten o'clock a motor-car had picked me up and I was speeding away, with my back to the mountain, towards the seemingly illimitable plain, averaging 6,000 feet elevation that it was my intention to cross during the next few days. Within half-an-hour I was sitting in the cool living-room of Mr. King, a settler with both Canadian and Australian experience, who is interested in several well-grassed stock and wheat farms, around his homestead. Considering the nature of the country and climate a surprisingly good garden encircles the house. The atmosphere of this place is very colonial and every indication points to a stout struggle being put up here to make good.

Thence my guide drove me along a grass track for some miles to the homestead of Major Armstrong, a wealthy ex soldier settler, at the moment absent in England, who has bought up other adjoining farms until he has accumulated a total area of 13,000 acres. What I saw of this country struck me as being richly pastoral in quality; quite suited for cattle breeding, fattening and dairying, with extensive areas and river flats capable of growing crops or fodder. All this territory between the Ugaso Nyero river and the Lekiaga hills, is included in North Kenya, which, strictly speaking, reaches to the slopes of the mountain.

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Major Armstrong possesses a nucleus herd of three or four hundred grade cattle in very good condition, and 450 sheep. His pure shorthorn bulls are good and include a fine dark red, that has unfortunately lost an eye by a thorn, named Springvale Rex, 20 months, with Springvale Squire, a light roan, 22 months old; both from Groom, Rosetta, Natal, but entirely unrelated. Also Ingestre Jupiter from Carless, Mooi River, Natal, a 20-month-old roan. A good cement dip and some solid buildings have already been erected here. In the garden were growing bananas, chillies and cotton; and I venture the prophecy that the last two crops may become staple products of North Kenya and Laikipia, especially if the right varieties are sought for and found.

Another half-hour's motor ride brought me to the property of Captain Chater, R.N., a young settler who had already retired from the Navy and was gaining experience in New Zealand when the late war broke out. He, however, immediately joined up again, spending the trying years of conflict chiefly on submarines in the North Sea. To-day his practical knowledge of many phases of life combines to make him a most promising citizen of this young colony; for, with the remarkable adaptability of the Naval man, he can turn his hand to any form of mechanical work from house-building to engine-driving and he is already well-advanced in the mysteries of stock-management. On Lolbatu, as he calls his ex-soldier estate, he runs 300 head of horned stock, and 190 sheep. Captain Chater is one of the best examples of the settlers that our ex-soldier scheme has attracted to Kenya; and, if the proper methods had been applied, hundreds, if not thousands, of similar men might have been happily domiciled to-day on our empty areas to the great financial, commercial and human benefit of this young colony. Instead of so desirable a consummation, however, one cannot pass through this fine stock area without discovering that a large proportion of these spacious 2,000 to 5,000 acre farms were given out to people with no intention, apparently, of occupying or usefully developing them.

Captain Chater's farm abounds with olive trees and a bush he calls wild coffee. He has built an excellent wooden dip with Kenyan cedar which—caulked as only a sailor knows how—is quite watertight, and he has 30 acres under cultivation. Like most of the resident settlers in this district he is making a furrow to enable green stuff to be grown at any time of the year. Apart from this popular form of development, the problem of improving the carrying capacity of the vast North Kenya—Laikipia countryside has hardly been given any serious thought—though it should have been a cardinal principle in its colonisation—owing to the insatiable land hunger and speculation in holdings that our settlement methods breed. For who will bother with pastoral betterment when one can always increase one's area more easily than one's stock? It is, in fact, at present, impossible to estimate the carrying capacity of this territory; but when fencing and other improvements are further advanced, and game stamped out, it will eventually be very high.

Next morning I formed one of a party that, starting near Nanyuki, had arranged to traverse by mule buggy the North Kenya and Laikipia country; and in bright sunshine, with a refreshing breeze behind us, we duly struck this long trail. Like the old galleon,

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Fort Gregoria, that Bret Harte tells about in one of his prettiest ballads, for the rest of that day we dodged in and out of the Equator:

"Creeping along with storm and shine
"Through the tropics under the Line."

Rain was in fact about and the weather at times muggy. Some anxiety possessed me lest I should be caught by an early instalment of the long rainy season, which I judged was likely to be an unusually heavy one this year. When the sun came out at full strength about mid-day and during the early afternoon hours, it descended on our devoted heads with a heavy hand; my own dripping with perspiration under my light sun-helmet. The Uasin Nyero was already in flood from soaking night rains on Mount Kenya, but our four vigorous mules negotiated the drift easily enough, thanks to the guidance of a careful driver.

The Whistling Tree.

This river is the boundary between North Kenya and Laikipia, upon which latter territory I now found myse'f. The main features of all this country are, however, much the same; consisting of mile after mile of flat or slightly sloping land covered with short, sweet herbage, in which appear, more or less thickly, stunted, black thorn saplings. Here and there a perfectly clear stretch of downs has to be crossed; with nothing to indicate why the ubiquitous thorn bush is absent. Then a blind creek or a depression in which the occurrence of green thorn-trees probably bespeaks the presence of subterranean water. Here for the first time in my life I came in contact with that curious phenomenon, a musical tree. Several times as we journeyed along, a thin, shrill sound like the ghost of an uneasy fife was noticeable. At first I attributed the noise to some insect; but on enquiry became informed that it was the whistling thorn tree of Laikipia, caused by the wind blowing into grub-made cavities in its wooden excrescences.

Shortly before mid-day we reached an oasis in the wilderness in the shape of Mr. A. O. Roberts' homestead on the banks of the Uasin Nyero. The owner is one of Laikipia's best known settlers and a leading flock-master of Kenya, who, previous to taking up his land here, was manager for some years on Waterloo Farm, perhaps the finest natural sheep run round Naivasha and in the Rift Valley.

Coming to Kenya with a thorough training in his particular line of farming gained in South Africa, Mr. Roberts, together with his wife, whom he married in this colony, is an acquisition to Laikipia; and their jolly, hospitable home has become a general rendez-vous for all crossing the Plateau or who, owing to a solitary life in this far-away district, are in need of cheerful company and a warm welcome. There is an air of well-directed activity about the place that is reminiscent of the best Colonial traditions; and this couple possesses a charming family of sturdy, loveable children which it is a delight to see. The run has 800 sheep on it, all high-grade merino, and they averaged 6lbs. of wool last shearing. A good herd of cattle is also on the property; and Mr. Roberts makes considerable quantities of cheese which find a ready market in Nairobi, over 150 miles away by road. Freight costs are, however, a serious drawback to this trade in dairy products, and 40 cents per lb. have to be deducted on this account from profits. After a pleasant lunch here we took the road again, trekking for the next few

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hours through miles and miles of sweet, healthy thorn-bush plain, with every here and there the plaintive note of the whistling tree. The tufty nutritious pasture of Laikipia seems identical with much of Australia's best grazing country; and indeed would be indistinguishable from it if stunted gum and she-oak were substituted for the characteristic African thorn. Plenty of game exists here, but we saw very little of it, an occasional oryx, or herds of Thomson's gazelle and zebra being all that came within sight of our track.

At sundown we reached a substantial, newly built stone house belonging to Mr. Cairns, where we received a hearty welcome from his mother and sister—the owner himself being absent on that most important business of life which is connected with getting married. After a comfortable night's rest my party made an early morning start and by 10 a.m. we arrived at the homestead of Mr. Lamox Aggett Smith, a cheerful bachelor settler who possesses a fine herd of cattle. This property is situated well on the Rumuruti side of Laikipia. During the previous few miles we had passed over the driest part of the plateau, where little or no rain had yet reached the parched pasture, across a number of ex-soldier farms, abandoned because they have no permanent running water, though good streams are within a few miles. Every one of these selections, however, possesses encouraging indications that the precious fluid might be obtained by sinking, while innumerable suitable sites for dams also occur on them. No man with back-country Australian experience would hesitate to take up a farm here at a reasonable quit-rent. Near "Glen Roy," Mr. Smith's place, the grass grew greener again and thence on I found myself within the ambit of the high country around Thomson's Falls, resulting in a rainfall that was clearly heavier than the 18 to 22 inches average of mid-Laikipia.

To some the whole of this country from Nanyuki appears tiringly monotonous; but one will never hear a practical sheep or stockman find fault with it on that account; and indeed none but those who are inexperienced and unused to big stretches of pastoral country would do so. The great stock countries of the earth are all of this nature, only more extreme in their heat and droughts and generally poorer. They are certainly more monotonous; for I found, if my eyes sought a change from this pleasant flat or undulating plateau, it was only necessary to lift them south to where, across the Ngobit, which runs roughly parallel with my route, the long sierra of the Aberdares filled the entire horizon; or eastwards to the mighty pyramid of snow-crowned, forest-clad Kenya. Over the Ngobit, which waters a very similar country to that along the Uasin Nyero, the land begins to rise to the Aberdares and consists of some of the finest sheep and cattle country in Kenya. Here big estates are being established by a few of the oldest and best known pastoralists of the colony. They possess ample stock from many years of patient breeding and pioneering, and this development is but the natural outcome of bona-fide, industrious settlement on their part; though one could wish that a proper *racial* policy of European expansion and settlement here had rather directed their energies towards profitably supplying newcomers, intent on occupying Laikipian lands in medium sized grazing farms, with the stock they need so badly.

There is some agitation going on throughout the world of

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the great pastoral area amongst the holders of ex-soldier farms to get rents reduced from twenty cents of a shilling per acre to six—which pre-war settlers are charged. It is certainly anomalous that this sort of land should pay as much as coffee or maize land; and one cannot help but feel a keen sympathy with this demand wherever struggling, home-making pioneers are found, who have entirely thrown in their lot with the life of the colony and are living on their properties in which all their money is invested in a bona-fide manner. The authorities might be well-advised to use this reduction, if they decide to grant it, as a lever to discourage speculation in these farms by refusing any alteration in the present rent unless the owner is entirely concentrating his capital and permanently resident upon his block or has stocked up to the minimum extent of say one sheep to every three acres or a horned beast to every ten acres, which is probably somewhere near the average carrying capacity of wild Laikipia land.

(f) Thomson's Falls District.

It was nearing sunset when I emerged from the lower, typical Laikipia country and rode upwards, in the late sunshine, across a cool, wind-swept, heavily grassed territory reminiscent of Clifton Down in spring-time towards the welcoming red roof of Major Luxford's residence.

Since 2 p.m. of a hot, sticky day I had been travelling first along a stream that lost itself at intervals in papyrus swamps; and then through lightly timbered slopes that led gently up to an open plain, also slightly rising, in the direction of the Thomson's Falls country. Early in the afternoon I crossed the Sugoroi to another open plain; but by 4 p.m., having negotiated the Pesi river fording, the sweet, somewhat scanty sheep pasture that is usual in Western Laikipia, at the end of the dry season, changed suddenly to entirely different physical characteristics.

A few miles of scrub and forest, in which one felt any kind of big game or carnivora might be met, covered shattered geological strata indicating a fundamental alteration in the basic nature of the soil. The Pesi river is on the edge of things and henceforth the luxuriant grass of a true cattle, dairying and agricultural area surrounded me. Already along favoured slopes and across the summit of rises cultivation was in process and, catching sight of an ex-soldier (Mr. Joubert) at work with his teams, I enquired the way of him and was very civilly directed over the open veldt to my destination for the night.

Two ravines had still to be traversed, but eventually at sun-down I came up to Major Luxford's spacious homestead, neatly built of cedar slabs from adjoining forests, to find its comfortable verandah crowded with a jolly party and the preparations for a dance that night well forward. The spirit in which my unexpected arrival was accepted gave me the pleasurable assurance that here the more the merrier did not as a natural corollary carry the drawback of meaning the lesser cheer for the general company.

That night the merriment was kept up to a late hour. A great cedar log and maize-cob bonfire in the centre of the lawn in front of the house before which guests could seat themselves kept away all likelihood of chill at this 7,000 feet level from those who might be inclined to over-exert themselves.

Next day I was out in time to see the numerous poultry being fed in

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neat wire-netting runs; and in a hollow some distance in front of the house I found a vegetable and fruit garden well stocked with bananas, strawberries, rhubarb, fruit-trees, cabbages, etc.

There is a newness about all the Thomson's Falls area on the north-east side of the cataract, due to the farms that are occupied having only been started within the last year or two. In view of this the development speaks volumes for the energy and enthusiasm of the settlers, who have had to contend with many difficulties; amongst which have been the foraging expeditions on their crops of maize made by six elephants, who apparently had also decided that this was a good territory to settle in, and the long distance from the railway.

At the time of my visit to this farm 100 acres were being prepared for maize; and sound, productive arable land it looked. Hitherto, on virgin land, 7 to 8 bags of this cereal have been harvested, though it takes 8 to 9 months to ripen here. But wheat has given a return of 30 bushels; and barley promises to yield especially heavily.

An inspection such as I was able to make brings out clearly the belief that here is a particularly fine mixed farming country where, in a few years, many of the methods, rotations and combinations of a first-class English agricultural district may be usefully applied. Dairying is especially a likely industry; for the character of the pasture and the elevation, which is between 6,500 and 8,000 feet, ensures rich milk and excellent quality butter of good flavour.

Major Luxford has 55 pure or grade Ayrshire cows together with several hundred native cattle and one or two Polled Angus stock. Well fenced paddocks contain this herd after sunset so that the beasts have the advantage of night grazing, a most important desideratum for stock in whose veins runs imported blood, as it has been found they are much more active during the dark hours than the African breeds with ages of close night confinement behind them.

The situation of Major Luxford's homestead is singularly beautiful and bracing. Its front overlooks the entire Laikipia Plateau to the Loldaiga Hills and mighty Kenya itself. On the left lie illimitable plains with the Pesi swamp, a dark patch in the foreground; and at the back of the house the afforested divide between all this northern territory and Upper Gilgil is visible, including the great cleft of the Falls. The morning I left this hospitable and cheerful place—after breakfasting on an ostrich egg omelet—my first house of call was at Major B. O. King's.

The road lay uphill through delightful diversified scenery of rolling down, donga and forest until my party came upon the original homestead of this property within view of the timber bedecked gorge which conceals the rapids. This estate proved to be an excellent agricultural farm and a first-class dairying proposition. There are already 400 horned stock here, many of them Ayrshire. The owner, an ex-professional engineer, runs a saw-mill for his cedar forest and has assembled a very complete tool-shop in this out-of-the-way spot. A new, substantial house is arising on a noble natural terrace that overlooks the beautiful country and the sylvan banks of the gorge to the westward for many miles.

This call over, my guide took me via a picturesque but lonely route through patches of red soil and hill country and cedar glades, until at length we came out over the divide and the most northerly expanse of Gilgil country with Lake Ol-bollomsat on our left lay open before us.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE THIKA PROVINCE.

(a) A Wonderful Estate, Intelligently Developed Donyo Sabuk.

The day I journeyed into the Donyo Sabuk district, 15 to 20 miles east of Thika and the Blue Posts Hotel, the weather was cool and sunny; but pools lay here and there on the generally firm murram road, indicating recent showers. With the great mountain ahead that gives this region its name, and which is such a conspicuous landmark from Nairobi, the illimitable Athi Plains to the right and the Kakuzi and Ithanga Hills on the left across the Thika and Athi Rivers, a pleasanter or more diversified drive on a fine morning would be hard to find.

Sisal, already a familiar object in the township's landscape, materialises into commercial plantations as one proceeds, displacing great patches of the scattered timber and waving cut grass pasture indigenous here. The latter by-the-bye so closely resembles Australia's Kangaroo grass that it is indistinguishable from it so far as the layman is concerned.

Thirteen miles out the traveller crosses the long bridge, one of the best jobs of the Administration's P.W.D. in Kenya, that spans the very considerable width of the Athi river, and enters the territory of Sir Northrup McMillan, Legislative Council for this and adjoining districts united under the title of the Ukamba electorate.

This noble domain includes the whole of Mount Donyo Sabuk within its borders and covers an area of 30,000 acres, mostly delimited by natural river boundaries, of which the Athi, the Murubori and the Blackstone are of chief importance. So great are the variations of soil, aspect, elevation and climate on this estate and so diversified its potentialities in the direction of water power creation, timber, agricultural and pastoral products and even mining that it might be reasonably likened to a complete and self-sufficient principality; more in keeping with the fascinating qualities of some legendary area born of human imagination than a matter-of-fact block of nearly fifty square miles of Kenya Colony.

The lowest areas of the property descend to well below 5,000 feet elevation; the summit of Donyo Sabuk is 7,000 feet. The latter majestic eminence carries and nurtures on its back one of the biggest herds of buffalo known to exist in Kenya. These great creatures as a rule keep modestly out of sight in their favourite retreat amongst the extensive stretches of forest and pampas on the upper portion of the mighty hill; but woe may easily betide the careless or foolhardy wanderer who, regarding their existence as a fiction or beneath his notice, invades incautiously their sanctuary. There are 3,000 acres of cocoa-coloured soil and ten to fifteen thousand acres of black cotton land that may some day be cultivated. The rest is broken or steeply sloping and only suitable for stock; but its grazing qualities are very high and have indeed hardly been seriously considered from ranching, fattening, dairying or carrying points of view. The management is marking time in this

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tion and there are at present only 200 cattle on the property—mostly working oxen.

Water Power.

The Athi Falls along the river boundary of Donyo Sabuk, and beginning a short distance below the big bridge, provide two distinct sources of motive force; one from a fifty foot drop and the other from a fall of ninety feet. These are capable of supplying continuously one thousand to twelve hundred horse power at low water; and considerable progress has already been made in the direction of harnessing this strength, but operations are now suspended in view of the establishment of a very large power plant under limited liability in the immediate vicinity.

Of the crops on this estate, sisal takes pride of place with eighteen hundred acres already planted and a yearly system of rotation consisting at present of 300 additional acres annually. It is hoped to increase eventually this annual area to 400 or 450 acres. Cutting was proceeding at the time of my visit. It is expected that the yield from the mature acreage now being put under tribute to the factory will amount to 450 tons; and that the annual increase from this year forward, as a result of the normal rotation already referred to, ought to raise the output to 800 tons clean fibre per year. The factory which is the most up-to-date in Kenya, is driven at present by steam in order to utilise the fuel made available in large quantities as a result of clearing, and also because the water power plans have not yet been completely materialised. Electric power will be however eventually the permanent motive force. The sisal bolas, after their leaves are cut, have a ludicrous resemblance to Gargantuan pineapples, and the young poles, in their first stages of growth, are like huge sticks of asparagus. A very amusing and deceptive photograph of what appears to be marvellous market-gardening may be obtained with their help.

Coffee undoubtedly could be grown extensively on the red soil of Donyo Sabuk; and fifty to a hundred acres have been planted for some years. Sisal however being the main crop, no great interest is shown in this product; for it is demonstrable that not only does an estate of these dimensions generally prosper better by sticking to one reliable industry, but also that sisal, if grown intelligently on a large scale, and with reasonable economy and attention, is at least as profitable as the aromatic bean. More interest is perhaps shown at present in sugar; for fifty acres have recently been put in as an experiment and are doing very well in spite of abnormally dry seasons during the last year or two. But Donyo Sabuk is a great rain-doctor, and if any clouds with moisture to precipitate come within its orbit they are almost certain to be induced to part with some, if not all, their fluidity. It is only when the mountain doffs that halo of cloud, which it wears morning after morning when there is rain in the air, and assumes a nonchalant, retired-from-business appearance that its magic appears to desert it for a time; and aridity temporarily encroaches on all the lands and farms sheltering around its base from the parching conditions of the main plains.

For years past the game on this fine stretch of mountain, slope and steppe have been carefully preserved from indiscriminate slaughter; and in consequence a fair quantity of Kenya's general fauna may be found at almost any time somewhere on its broad acres. Besides the buffalo already mentioned,

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During this trip we crossed one or two neglected ex-soldier farms. More than one specimen of the Great Bustard stalked with dignity out of our track as we bowled along while a herd of zebra started and shied in graceful evolutions from our path and numerous broken or up-rooted trees showed where elephant had recently passed like some devastating hurricane.

At the Falls themselves we met several settlers from the still higher area of this district. A visitor from Portuguese East Africa who was with them informed me that he was making a practice of coming up to his brother here annually because he found the climate much cooler and pleasanter than Durban. The rainfall in this upper section of Thomson's Falls district is at least 60-in. and cattle thrive and fatten on the lush pasture no matter what scarcity of feed the Colony may be suffering from at lower levels. Nairobi butchers know this and make frequent buying visits in consequence.

Sheep are doing well and Karakuls are especially satisfactory as the ewes have been dropping as a rule two lambs per annum since their importation and are a fine mutton breed. There is a splendid assortment of valuable timbers in this upper district; and horses are doing remarkably well. Light frosts are experienced during December and January. Deciduous fruit does excellently and the entire European community is robust and loves the climate. Children flourish and possess the delicate complexions of cool, humid, healthy Northern countries. The soil varies from a rich dark loam to a lighter type, similar to the red coffee growing quality of lower levels. Lucerne hay, mangolds, wheat and barley thrive, but the 8,000-feet elevation is too high for maize.

This interesting trip over and my road at last joined up with the main Gilgil-Rumuruti highway. I was able, during the journey down to the station, to sum up my final impressions of the extensive country stretching from Nanyuki on the east to Rumuruti and Thomson's Falls on the west.

Summing-up Laikipia.

To the ordinary globe-trotter a province like Laikipia is noteworthy only for one feature, namely, the sport that may be obtained in it. If one knows where to look all the biggest game of Africa, as well as its carnivora, are to be found within or on its borders.

But to the home-maker or the settler, intent on wresting a living and an income from the land, there are other points which possess far greater value in his eyes than the shooting possibilities of this country-side, no matter how attractive they may be as a pastime. For this reason I will try to formulate a comprehensive statement covering the salient features of Western Laikipia from a practical, wealth-producing aspect.

The area may be divided into three distinct branches, as indeed has been accomplished by their local associations. That of Thomson's Falls is a true mixed farming, horse-breeding and cattle country. The Ngobit is chiefly suited for merino sheep, and has attracted some capable and experienced flock-masters whose work here is going to be of great future value to this industry in Kenya. But the Rumuruti district is mainly a cattle area, with sheep as a rival and much favoured secondary line of stock. Here too is the Angora goat flock of Mr. Grimbeck; by far the best that I know of in the country and a variety of domesticated animal which has been mistakenly neglected in Kenya.

Vast areas beyond Rumuruti are potential merino sheep and Angora goat country not yet 'brown-eyed to

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Europeans; but immediately in touch with the town, along the beautiful Narok river and in the Pesi Swamp area, is to be found a heavily pastured, dairying and cattle fattening country now being rapidly developed. The future of Rumuruti should be already assured by its strategic position amongst the wide selection of desirable country occupied around it; and as time goes on it will doubtless be the jumping-off place and local market for further white expansion to the west and north.

Though many parts of the main Laikipia Plateau do not possess a heavy rainfall the supply is nevertheless constant and droughts are practically unknown. At the time of my journey across the entire area the country was suffering from a dryness hitherto unprecedented. But no-one who has ever seen a real drought in a cattle or sheep country would compare this slight spell of aridity with the dread affliction. All my enquiries, as I passed through the territory from the neighbourhood of Mount Kenya to Thomson's Falls, failed to produce a single instance of death from starvation occurring amongst stock. For months after the main rainy season, which has never been known to fail, there are "lashuns" of feed—as any up-country Australian grazier would express it.

Rumuruti itself, though at present only an embryo township, is the centre of a vigorous community of settlers intent on creating there all the essential conveniences for their locality. An indication of their vigour may be gathered from the following incident. Finding both the retail prices and the political pretensions of the Indian duka-keepers insupportable, they established a co-operative store and eventually closed thereby every Asiatic shop.

The latest enterprise is a co-operative butter factory which has been badly needed ever since settlement began in order to create a market for milk and cream. Posho mills have been started also around the town, and though only a small quantity of maize is at present locally grown, sufficient for the needs of the neighbourhood is brought in from the Nyeri and Mount Kenya native reserves.

With sheep in the drier, more sparsely grassed areas, cattle in the better watered country, mixed farming in the more elevated lands with the heaviest rainfall, a thoroughfare to the trading centres and markets of the northern frontier and a keen body of settlers at work upon it, this countryside is as self-contained as one can wish and is definitely marked out for growth and prosperity.

At the present time it is a primitive country suited only for robust-minded, practical, vigorous folk with pioneering instincts and the cheery pertinacity of those who have always led in the expansion of our race. There is no room for the suburban-plot spirit that rises to indignant wrath because a neighbour has walked on the lawn or taken a short-cut across a piece of private property. It is a land of rude plenty, rapidly changing to healthy refinement wherever one finds a capable white woman installed as mistress of a household. In these far-away, newly settled areas the chief feature of the successful pioneer is his all-round capacity to do things for himself and his untiring kindliness and willingness towards his neighbours in any difficulty.

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impala, giraffe and all kinds of small buck are met with; and the more inaccessible places are seldom without specimens of lion and leopard. In the more ancient days of twenty years or so ago rhino were plentiful and elephant undoubtedly sometimes invaded the district on their annual pilgrimages to more distant mountainous areas. Crocodiles are found in the Athi.

The Sisal Factory.

My arrival at this estate found the sisal factory going full blast under the watchful eye of Mr. McVeagh, the acting manager. Round the horse-shoe bend of a moveable rail system that operates through the plantations, trucks loaded with cut leaves were being brought right up to the place of delivery and then moved on again when emptied to make room for others. The broadswords of sisal are carefully sorted to ensure uniformity in length of fibre in the different grades turned out by this factory. Indeed sorting begins with cutting in the field; is performed once more on delivery at the de-pulping entrance and goes through another hasty examination as the leaves run sideways into the feeder. Subsequently more attention is given to this subject of grading in the drying and baling processes. Each truck carried 2½ tons of leaves and over 20 trucks per day were being dealt with at the time of my visit, by the insatiable Robey decorticator; which is however able to pulp 100 tons per day turning out 3 tons of fibre from that quantity. The price this product is fetching to-day is £30 to £34 per ton in London, according to quality; and Donyo Sabuk's brand of "Kamba" is already favourably known and fetching best prices.

A water flume carries the waste pulp by gravity down a decline where a light green mound, like a gigantic ice-cream, was rising from it in the sunlight. Production of fibre in the horse and aim of sisal growing. But as one wanders round a great plantation like Donyo Sabuk it is difficult not to give thought sometimes to the possibilities that may be thrown away in the bye-products of this great industry. The waste pulp, composed of small discarded fibre, water and vegetable tissue, appears to be an admirable paper-making material. In addition, the liquid possesses a strong acidity which a manufacturing chemist might perhaps turn to commercial account. When at the end of eight years the plant throws up its pole, after producing an average fibre output of three tons to the acre from its leaves, this last supreme effort provides a rod equal in many respects to bamboo for light building purposes; but far more lasting, inasmuch as boring insects do not favour it. Indeed, on the rich soil of this estate a proportion of sisal is actually evolving poles ten inches to a foot in diameter at their base; so that if this tendency increases, it may yet be necessary or desirable to instal a small saw-mill plant to deal with this novel production of lumber. As to the poles, no use seems to have been suggested for these, short of mechanical crushing for paper manufacture. At present they are left in the ground to dry and are afterwards laboriously piled up and burnt.

Of all the ingenious devices incorporated in this ultra-modern factory at Donyo Sabuk there is only space for passing comment on the more important. The double drum system of leaf crushing is fascinating to watch. It first pulps one half of the constant stream of leaves fed sideways into it and then by a turn-over action presents the remaining half of each frond to the decorticating process. Thence the wet, limp sisal—very naturally feeling like a piece of chewed rag—is carried out on poles to dry in long rows. After that it is brushed clean of adhering leaf in a mechanically driven drum; which it has been found wise to enclose in a dust-suppressing

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Lever. The fibre, now softened and carded to a snowy white, is then squared at its ends and put into hanks preparatory to weighing in accumulated piles for placing in the baler, which is a powerful Bfjoli. Two hundredweight bales are turned out by this machine at the regulation size of 17in. x 16in. x 48in after being wired and released. Four qualities are produced, consisting of Prime; No. 1 (3ft. 6in. fibre); No. 2 (under 3ft. 6in.); and Tow. The bales are thereupon branded "Kamba," their quality indicated, a number given them, and placed to one side for transport to station. Thanks to the baling press a ton of this fibre can be squeezed into 67 cubic feet. Besides the main purpose of this factory there are attached thereto an excellent workshop and a maize-flour mill. An old posho mill that has been 18 years in work and was erected by the first pioneer of this area, Major Bunbury, who still lives on his farm near by, is an interesting relic of early days. Here too are found a maize shelter saw-benches and a coffee pulper, all placed where they may be operated by water-power from the Athi

The glory of this lord'y holding lies in its ever-changing beauty, its broad acres of varying foliage, its running waters, its timber and the folds and contours of the great mountain it carries. One can travel for miles within sight of half-a-dozen varying shades of green. There is the deep verdant blue of vigorously healthy sisal, which reminds one sometimes of the Mediterranean's colour where it intermingles with the olive-coloured waters of a shallow, shelving shore; or, from another angle or stage of life, of rich Kentucky blue grass pasture paddocks. At the other extreme and forming a delicious contrast, is the light, delicate tint of waving sugar cane, best seen between the more sombred green and old-gold flowers of Grevillia Robusta shade trees. The laurel, almost bronze, shade of coffee and the sombre colour of cupressus also add their touch of exquisite variety to the landscape on the northern side of Donyo Sabuk with here and there a handsome indigenous tree saved from the general clearing; and the grass of unbroken park-like land, fresh and sweet with recent rains encompassed it all about during my short visit.

Time and opportunity of transport afforded me a chance to view the western side of the estate, a region at present relegated entirely to game. A Fowler steam traction ploughing plant was at work, preparing more sisal land for next season on the north-western slopes of the arable land as we passed round the base of Donyo Sabuk. Beyond the last patch of sisal, the red or chocolate soil of the mountain merges into an extensive plain, heavily grassed of black cotton land.

Wheat Possibilities

There should be no difficulty in growing a thousand acres of wheat or other crops here in days to come when conditions of market, etc., encourage the development of this heavy type of soil. During the war an area was actually broken up, but has since been allowed to go back to pasture; and many sorts of buck now disport themselves here as if the white man were still only a promise of the future. Further west and south the Athi Plains run for many miles; and at night the lights of Nairobi may be seen twinkling in the distance from this side.

Retracing our footsteps, my guide, Mr McVeagh, a most courteous and hospitable acting-manager, found time to take me towards the western limits of the estate where, on a giant bank looking for a hundred miles down into the eye of the dawn through the vast valley of the

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Wakamba reserve and across the Ngaio Plains the owner's house has recently been erected from local stone. This is a very solidly built exceedingly spacious yet unpretentious mansion; consisting of two main living rooms and nine bedrooms. The great verandah facing that wide and ever fascinating view is probably the chief daytime haunt of its inhabitants in normal weather. At the time of our visit during the hottest part of a sunny day, the thermometer showed 70 deg. Fahr. here; or five degrees below English summer heat. Miss Kemp, the kindly cheerful housekeeper, conducted us round the various pleasantly furnished, comfortable rooms; and though the aim steadily kept in view has been to avoid unnecessary display and concentrate on homeliness combined with graceful utility, here and there some precious antique, that would gladden the heart of any collector, caught the eye. The ancient table of the dining room, imported from some west country ancestral English home, the solid board of which took twenty natives to put into position, impressed one as being a supreme emblem of the hospitality and simple tastes with which the atmosphere of the place is redolent.

Active gardening and tree-planting plans are being carried out to beautify the surroundings. A delightful grass terrace has been created in front of the verandah, with rustic stone steps leading down to paths along the rocky bank that falls away immediately beyond. Here in rich soil a variety of ornamental bushes, trees and flowering have already been planted which give promise of transforming this hillside into a mass of coloured glory where, when the long shadows of late afternoon fall across it, the sojourners at the big home may happily and gratefully congregate in the cool splendour of that breeze blessed pleasance.

Creating a Lake.

A mile or so away, in the grass-carpeted valley that lies open as a book to the dwellers of this house, a great lake is being created which will add the only ingredient at present missing to the completeness of the panorama. Here boating and fishing will be possible; and already thought is being taken to modify gradually for the better the sylvan slopes beyond the artificial water, yet without noticeably interfering with Nature. Beautiful as this country-side is in its native state, the removal of some scrub here or an unsightly tree or two there will still further improve it; while the touch of colour that a Bougainvillia can add to distant sombre forest green may become a thing of beauty and a joy for ever in landscape designing. Mr. McVeagh, who is a sisal enthusiast, is all for inserting a few paddocks of his favourite blue-green crop here; but it is distinctly doubtful whether Sir Northrup and Lady McMillan will agree to this innovation. The house is lighted by a 120-volt Delco plant. Good stables have been erected for Lady McMillan's horses; and excellent workshops and other outbuildings already exist. Perhaps the most beautiful experience that this carefully chosen site for a home can afford occurs in the early hours of those days when the clouds from the coast float inland through the Wakamba reserve and come to rest at the foot of the bank upon which the house stands. Whether this happens often the casual visitor cannot of course say, but I was privileged to see this phenomenon on the second morning of my stay. In the clear, fresh air of a cloudless overhead sky I looked down across a sea of vapour resembling frozen foam that entirely hid the underlying land from view, giving one the impression

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travelling in an airplane across illimitable stretches of Arctic ice-floes and snowfields.

Labour Mixtures.

The business side of this estate is controlled from Nairobi by Colonel Maxwell, and both the manager and engineer were away at the time of my visit. This naturally threw extra work upon the two remaining white men, Mr. McVeagh and Mr. Finnigan, who gave me what attention they could and made up for it by not returning to their bungalows till long after dark. Their absence enabled me to wander around alone to some extent and enjoy the experience of forming my own impressions without any promptings from those more familiar with the neighbourhood. The labour employed on Donyo Sabuk, which is of course considerable, is very mixed and there does not seem to be any very great number of either Wakamba or Kikuyu squatters and labourers. Kavirondo and Baganda are generally found to work sisal better than other tribes and this estate is no exception to the rule. Some trouble has been taken to encourage mission-trained African artisans to take the place of Indian fundis. In the clerical department, of which missions seem to make a speciality, difficulties have arisen before any office workers that could be tolerated were found, as when one exquisite arrived who announced that he was "Mister Josey," with the accent on the "Mister." Seeing that the European staff entirely dispense with handles to their names the idiosyncrasy of this African was too much for tame acceptance and he was put on the road again.

(b) The Donyo Sabuk Area.

Around the great mountain, that is the chief feature of Sir Northrup MacMillan's sisal property and has given the district its name, is a number of other fertile estates of considerable size and great productiveness. These prove conclusively that the neighbourhood is an unusually rich one; and when, in the natural course of events, the process of sub-division—already beginning—acquires momentum, a numerous and prosperous community of white settlers will subsist upon it.

Seven miles beyond the homestead of Donyo Sabuk and 22 miles from Thika, is the fine double-storeyed, roomy house of Mr. Geo. Stuart Watt, the pioneer of deciduous orchard nursery work in the Colony. This home is the centre of unceasing activity and is wisely situated, not only for the control of the 3,500-acre farm of which it is the Intelligence department, but also from a scenic and health point of view. Though standing at only an elevation of 5,000 ft. perpetual breezes beat against it; keeping the atmosphere as cool and sweet as an English country home's in summer-time on the western coast of Devonshire.

The main ridge of auburn-coloured soil surrounding the house is of extraordinary fertility and immense depth. At the time of my visit a heavy maize crop, reaching a height of 15 feet in some places and carrying three or four cobs to a stalk, covered an area of 200 acres of it, notwithstanding that the season has not been regarded generally as a favourable one. Mr. Stuart Watt may have been particularly fortunate in sowing this crop at the psychological moment; but the fact remains that I have seen nothing like it elsewhere at this time of the year—really an off season—and a reasonable estimate of the yield that may be expected is 15 to 20 bags to the acre. The average rainfall on this property is 45 inches annually.

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environs of the homestead have been greatly beautified by judicious and tasteful landscape gardening. A blaze of colour was showing from the beds that encircle it; and the drive, planted only a year or two ago with Japanese bamboos, is a sheltered delight. Monkey puzzles, the Xmas fir of Northern Europe and Norfolk Island pines, are amongst the other trees that lend fascination to this pleasant spot. Near by an excellent vegetable garden and an orchard of sub-tropical fruits such as guavas, pine-apples, pawpaws, etc., give that smack of utility necessary to prove the homestead is not a mere show place.

On one side, the broad veranda that encompass both storeys of the handsome edifice, look for miles down into the Wakamba Reserve or across to its hills and those of Ithanga; on the other they stare straight into the eastern slope of Donyo Sabuk itself and at so close a range that when the prolific herbage is bare the buffalo may at times be seen circulating, like fat, dark-coloured slugs, up and down the game trails or in and out the patches of bush as they move to fresh pasture.

The main attraction on this farm to the visitor is the deciduous orchard work that proceeds constantly in the fruit plantation. Mr. Geo. Stuart Watt is himself an interesting personality, for he is not only—though a young man—probably the earliest resident settler in Kenya, but is certainly the first European of the colony who has both been reared in it and made it his permanent home. He is married to a young lady also brought up in Kenya and is already raising a sturdy second generation of East Africans at Donyo Sabuk.

Fruit growing and nursery work appealed to him early in life and his main excursion out of Kenya took him to Canada where, in Ontario, he served a thorough apprenticeship to the business. In his orchard of 50 acres a succession of heavy yields during the past few years has entirely removed the very natural incredulity of many folk that apples and other choice English fruits can be grown practically under the Equator at 5,000 ft. altitude.

From the mature portion of this plantation something like 20 tons of fruit have gone away this year alone; and during my stay I saw two wagons, each loaded with 2½ tons of apples, start for Thika station. The remarkable precocity of what is usually regarded as a particularly conventional and sedate class of vegetation is worth recording in order to show the bewildering effect of Kenyan conditions on deciduous fruit trees. From a two-year-old infant of an apple tree no less than 50 fruit were picked in my presence. Peaches, plums, pears and citrus all bear in heavy profusion here.

From personal experience I am able to vouch for the excellent flavour of all these products. Indeed I came away loaded both inside and out and quite exhilarated with the happy feeling of a school-boy who has robbed an orchard, that my agreeable task had been well and truly accomplished. In passing I would like to express my commiseration with the youth of Kenya that this fine collection of fruit trees is situated so far from any educational or juvenile centre.

The coffee plantation on this estate, though coming second in importance to fruit as a main perennial crop, looks splendid and is of surpassing quality and profit; the owner recording an average yield of half a ton to the acre. Pigs pay well on this estate as a side line, and increased attention is

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being given to meeting the growing demand for ornamental trees and bushes throughout the Colony.

Rhododendrons, azaleas, magnolias, bulbs of many kinds, and other choice flowering plants from all the world were being carefully tended, potted and propagated for the coming season. In addition, Mr. Stuart Watt has quite a reputation as a successful hunter and safari leader; and from his fine home as a base he frequently undertakes the conducting of parties into the great game preserve of the Loita plains, which are almost at his door, and even to the distant hills where elephant are to be found.

The nearest neighbours to Mr. Stuart Watt's Donyo Sabuk orchards are the Clay Brothers on their coffee farm named La Finca. These settlers came here only two or three years ago from Peru—it is a feature of the district that almost every settler has a practical knowledge of some important section of the overseas world, and no two overlap. Their estate consists of 2,040 acres, mostly arable; and they have already 80 acres under coffee with 100 acres in maize, all looking well.

Though these two newcomers have had somewhat adverse conditions to contend with ever since their arrival they have battled against them with admirable persistence, intelligence and success. Steady, careful, well-directed work unless cataclysmal bad luck occurs, generally wins out and Messrs. Clay Bros. show every indication of achieving prosperity within the next few years. Certainly their faith in the Donyo Sabuk district has never wavered; and they would not exchange to any other.

Dairying, maize and general agriculture have been their standby. Their butter is deservedly well-known in Nairobi and Thika for its consistently fine quality. Their cattle consist of sixty native and grade cows and they are steadily grading up into Ayrshire stock. Very alert and enterprising in all they do, they are seriously experimenting with all the latest ideas of coffee shading, training and pruning. Both the twin-stemmed and the *agobiada* or drooping systems of training coffee are being tried.

They have built an excellent cattle dip at a cost of under £200; and there are ample wells, springs and a splendid dam on the estate. Their soil is either the sound, cocoa-coloured stuff that is famous for coffee-growing or a rich, loose, sandy black, the qualities of which have not yet been fully tested, but are suspected to be remarkably good for a variety of valuable crops. Their elevation is 5,100 ft.; last year's rainfall was 43.50 inches; the average maize yield is estimated at 12—15 bags of 200 lbs. to the acre. Their natural country, like all this district, is excellent for stock and has great carrying capacity. When broken it is a reliable wheat producer.

Passing through an excellent arable and stock farm, belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Thornton, a charming old Yorkshire couple who, with their five sons and a daughter have become devoted Kenyans, where coffee and citrus, though proved, have not yet been developed on any scale, I travelled south from La Finca until the estate of the late Mr. Deacon, well out in the plain, was reached. It is a matter of keen regret to me that it was never my fortune to visit this property before the recent decease of its creator; for Mr. Deacon was a fine specimen of the tireless, hardy, indomitable, practical Australian who can make good under conditions that less experienced

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and less determined men would regard as impossible.

It is on record that, like some of our most successful pioneers, Mr. Deacon came to Kenya without capital many years ago. In the early days when he first took up the circular hill which is a landmark for many miles across the Athi Plains, he was puzzled to know what to go in for in order to make money.

To begin with, he tried pigs and laboured incessantly to produce the much coveted porker necessary to the butcher and the bacon-curer. But they all died of swine fever. Then he struggled on as a wheat grower, fighting against the incursions of immense herds of game and finding it extremely difficult to sell his grain when, with infinite pains he had saved, harvested and carted it. Eventually he turned his attention to coffee; although everyone prophesied further and complete disaster. But fortune henceforward smiled on his efforts, if only in order to refute the Jeremiahs.

Mr. Tom Deacon was a man's man and deserved the luck he finally won. He belonged to that great type of pioneer which opened up the Western States of America, th gold-fields and pastoral or farming areas of Australia, Canada and the Klondyke. If we knew who, of all men of our race, best deserve homage for great achievements done in the face of insuperable odds he would be numbered with those saints. I, for one, shall never forget his steely, grey eyes, his strong lined face and wiry figure—nor the characteristically quaint felt hat that topped and suited so well the silent, modest personality of the pioneer who discovered the Magadi Soda Lake.

However Miss Deacon, who is carrying on the fine enterprise her father founded here with hereditary ability, in conjunction with Mr. Grant, her uncle—who has lived in Kenya for thirteen years—was at home; and most amiably and hospitably did the honours of the property. It is indeed a pleasant surprise to meet a real Australian girl in such an out-of-the-way corner of the world. And this rencontre was doubly interesting because Miss Deacon came here from the extreme heat and aridity of the Riverina, only a few years before her father'-death.

Many local folk consider the Athi Plains a warm place; and, if they know little of the work-a-day world in Britain's other dominions may regard them as insufferable. But here I found an experienced young woman who is delighted with the cool, salubrious climate of her surroundings and who looks back with something akin to dread to the frazzling heat she endured philosophically during the previous years of her life in Australian back-blocks. As a matter of fact shade temperature on Deacon's Hill never rises above 86 degs. Fahr. In the Australian Riverina where Miss Deacon came from 120 degs. and over are annually registered.

The circular hill, already alluded to, was of particular attraction to me for, during the years I have known it by sight from a distance of many miles, its aspect and the dark belt of cultivation encircling it, have always brought back to memory my earliest experiences of colonial life and similar volcanic hills in Australia. Now at last I found that the late owner belonged to Victoria; had lived in the very districts I knew best; and had doubtless drawn his inspiration from and perhaps acquired the mount itself on the strength of his familiarity with the Bald Hills of Dowling Forest and Bungaree around Ballarat, where heroic pioneers had at least thirty years

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ago started cultivating similar elevations from base to summit for wheat, oats and potatoes.

There are 150 acres of bearing coffee planted on this estate, the extraordinary luxuriance of which challenges anything in Kyambu or elsewhere. Perhaps the secret of its success is that Mr. Deacon adopted the novel and daring plan of actually ploughing between his coffee annually, instead of merely cultivating. This is dry-farming indeed; but, it seems to pay well. During the very droughty seasons as little as five cwt. per acre have been harvested here; but in good years the crop has yielded half a ton of clean coffee.

A feature of this estate and a permanent memorial to the deceased son of the drought continent are the great dams he created. I can well imagine this stout-hearted Australian laughing to himself at the croakers who would regard this area as worthless because it possessed neither surface nor running water. What country-bred Australian would be frightened of any superficial shortage of this precious element with a 40-inch rainfall, or indeed half that? To-day there are five dams of immense combined capacity; and very little water can escape from the estate until they are overflowing.

One more important estate in this district is worthy of description; for its owner, Mr. Verstrome Bunbury, is one of the original settlers of the Donyo Sabuk country and has also pioneered industries of great importance to Kenya. He came here in 1904 and was the first man to bring sisal into the colony. He planted his first consignments of this crop brought up from the old German East Territory near Athi River Station; but countless herds of game were driven on to it by a grass fire and they completely destroyed it.

For many years past sugar has been his speciality and he built on this estate of 2,500 acres the first sugar factory in the country. Though only a comparatively small affair he for years turned out from it quite a saleable quality of Demerara and Jaggoree; and though, through absence in England and ill health, he has not been pushing this industry of late, he still has five, out of his original nine, varieties of sugar cane growing on the property.

These are Seeley's Seedling; No. 33; Mazeras Ribbon; Uba; and native cane. He proposes now to develop this industry further and is planting up again with the coming rains. There are 400 acres of rich, irrigable, alluvial flats alongside the Athi River suited to this crop, 68 of which are under cultivation. There are also 75 acres of coffee in bearing; and, indeed, at least half the property is arable. As are the neighbouring estates this farm is a splendid stock proposition and would cut up into attractive dairy farms.

Fine Cattle.

East Coast Fever is however endemic and must be guarded against by dipping. During a stroll down to the sugar factory and irrigation furrow I came across a fine herd of cattle, all prime fat and standing contentedly up to their knees in lush green grass; making a superb pastoral scene in the delightful late afternoon sunshine.

Mr. Bunbury lived for years on great cattle ranches in the Argentine before coming to Kenya and is able to make some very interesting comparisons as to the respective carrying capacity of the two countries. The best run he knew in South America was fully

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stocked with 1,500 head to the square league, lucerne and all, which is roughly equal to ten square miles (English) or 4.26 acres per head. This is about the average capacity of the poorest wild upland pasture in this district; but in the better grassed sections or where care is taken to paddock and improve it the superiority of Kenya is manifest. The homestead garden here is full of experiments and its tobacco looked particularly good. On the irrigable land near the river some coconuts have been planted and are to-day twenty feet high.

(c) Where Electrical Energy from Water-Power is Being Pioneered.

Lowering clouds and a besodden soil indicated the climatic conditions obtaining on the afternoon during the wet season that I walked across from the Thika station, via the township and Blue Posta Hotel, to the homestead of the Thika Sisal Co., Ltd., about three miles away. Unprecedently heavy rains had recently fallen and the turbulent, mud-stained waters of the immensely swollen Chania and Thika rivers tossed their tawny manes as they danced riotously forward to their big jump over the falls just below their respective bridges.

The ling was a vivid green relieved by patches of colour from numerous wild-flowers; chief amongst which were a verbena-like plant with sparrow-egg blue blossom and the salmon-pink Kenyan substitute for the English primrose or cowslip.

The shelter of a commodious, solidly-built house such as obtains here is in wintry weather grateful and comforting; and that evening, although this home has been established at an elevation of only 5,000 ft., my host and hostess, Commander and Mrs. Lawford, as well as the guests that happened to be assembled under their roof, sat appreciatively before a good log fire.

After a night's steady rain, the surroundings of the homestead seemed infinitely sweet and fresh, from the broad roomy verandah I found myself looking into a garden of pergolas and ornamental trees with patches of gray-blue salvia, whose colour was accentuated by contrast with brilliantly scarlet-leafed poinsettas backed by an ample setting of close cut grass, all the work of Mrs. Lawford during the last three years. In the distance on the eastern horizon lay Mount Donyo Sabuk.

The estate that is controlled from this pleasantly situated residence is 7,500 acres in extent; of which about 2,000 acres are already planted to sisal and 50 acres to coffee. There is a maximum of 4,000 acres of cultivable land; the remainder being steep, stony or gravel country only suited for grazing. The strong flowing Thika river bounds the property on the south; while the Kiboko and the Makindi, which effect a junction on the Company's land, comprise the northern border.

After breakfast in company with the manager, Commander Lawford, R.N., I was able to ride through the estate and see the sisal that grows upon it in all its various stages of growth and maturity; from suckers not yet separated from their parent plants to the sere, withered patriarchs who have been cut out, have poled and find there is nothing more left to live for.

This plant matures rapidly under the stimulating conditions of a very rich friable chocolate soil, a warm climate and a rainfall that is close on 40 inches per annum; and this tendency is still further increased by the system of constant cleaning and cultivation practised on this estate. The bluegreen tint of healthy sisal in its prime, which is a feature of this Thika country, was visible on

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many surrounding undulations and patches of country as we rode towards the factory, passing through en route a four-year-old plantation that had already lost to the factory most of the lower blades

Sisal is cut out, here, six years from planting; poling often starts a year or two before under the forceful conditions enumerated above; and allowing two years to get the land into order again, i.e., cleaned of the dead stumps and planted up with new suckers, it requires a rotation or cycle of 250 acres per annum of fresh planting to keep up the average output necessary to ensure the profitable and reasonably full utilisation of a normal factory.

The average output of clean sisal fibre is in the neighbourhood of 3 tons per acre over the six years; the average price realised to-day on the London market is £35 per ton; and the cost of production, freight and all the charges unavoidable in getting it into the auction rooms there work out at about £20 per ton.

Clearing land of worked-out sisal boles and suckers has always been considered a heavy undertaking. Indeed, £6 per acre is often quoted as a reasonable expenditure to incur for this task. Commander Lawford hopes, however, by system and intelligence to reduce this expenditure by half.

In addition one or two crops of maize are grown on the old sisal land, either before or concurrently with re-planting; and it has been found that this grain yields extraordinarily well on the highly cultivated, mellow conditions of soil subsequent to six years of sisal production.

It has also been found, on this property, that the combination of coffee and sisal may be operated together peculiarly well. For there is always a high percentage of workers employed all the year round on the latter crop, a portion of whom may be temporarily spared for the seasonal work of the former with a minimum of dislocation, trouble and expense.

The factory, a well roofed, ample building, contains a great decorticator, made by Robey & Sons, that can extract up to four tons of clean fibre daily. All the machinery here is worked by electricity from the Company's own power station on the Thika river near by. And electric light is laid on to all the buildings of the estate, including the homestead, from the same source.

To fully man the feeding, cleaning, drying, packing and baling sections of this great industrial focus of the estate's productivity, one hundred native workers are employed about the factory. It takes in all 400 to 500 natives to operate efficiently the 2,000 acres of sisal on the property, or an African to every 5 or 6 acres. What work in the futile, chaotic and barbarous reserves can show a proportion of well fed, well-paid, contented natives to equal this while at the same time producing a substantial revenue for the colony?

Yet one hears louder and louder the wail of the ignorant sentimentalist and leisured busybody at home complaining against the intrusion of the whiteman in coloured countries and the need of "protecting" the native by his exclusion. Payments to the Company's employees are made almost entirely on a "results" system which rewards the industrious and encourages by bonuses those who stay for lengthy periods of six months or over in its service; they all get food in addition.

At the time of my visit to this factory, work was somewhat disorganised by the heavy weather and muddy conditions obtaining. But an average of over two tons per diem was nevertheless being pro-

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shredded, and baled. The trolley system however was unable to cope with the transport of leaves from the field and had to be supplemented by a number of Scotch-carts drawn by teams of four oxen each. Ten boys were feeding the insatiable maw of the decorticator, putting the leaves or blades of sisal straight and right side up with the dexterity of fisher lasses splitting and packing a haul of verdant haddocks.

On the way down to the power station I passed through the lines of native huts; big, comfortable human bee-hives, built of the useful sisal poles, that a whiteman would not find it a hardship to live in. They were scattered about in small groups and not in the usual close unbroken rows that are favoured in many places. This prevents to a large extent, (or at least permits the regulation and isolation of) contagious or infectious diseases.

It is hardly necessary to add that a hospital is maintained on the estate. In addition to being fed by the company, any of the labourers who desires a patch of cultivation land may have for the asking an area chained off symmetrically. The haphazard, land-wasteful, native shamba of unknown shape and dimensions is not encouraged; with the result that the employees' food plots have something the appearance of those neat well-cultivated allotments that the inhabitants of our home towns and villages frequently maintain. The sisal suckers themselves are planted with the chain and the greatest care is exercised to ensure straight, parallel lines.

The Power Station.

An immensely strong stone and concrete dam wall 180 feet in length with its concavity backing against the Thika stream holds up the water supply for the huge turbine. And the company was well advised to make a strong job of their undertaking. Had they not done so the abnormal flood that it was my privilege to witness would have carried the bank away completely. At the time of my visit the turgid waters were flowing 2ft. 10in. above its top; and a height of 3ft. 5in. had been registered only a day or two before. The capacious spillway blasted in solid rock, ample as it appears to be, had been quite incapable of carrying away this unprecedented flow; and the laying of every stone and trowelful of cement was being strained and tested when I stood amidst that whirl of angry waters and overlooked this great engineering work.

Down in the power house, fitted throughout with Bruce Peebles' fine machinery, 500 h.p. generates to begin with 500 volts. This in turn is magnified into 10,000 volts by the alchemy of the electrical engineer and the up-to-date transformers in use. The same process downwards is later exercised at the factories, reducing this great force again to the power required—perhaps 200 volts only. The day before my arrival a native helper at the power station touched the 10,000 voltage live wire with a metal pipe he was carrying and received the full force of this tremendous current. Though completely knocked out for ten minutes or so he was back at his work within half-an-hour. For some folk it is perhaps better to be born tough than lucky.

The effect of the heavy flood on the turbine was, strange to say, not an accelerating one. The water below the dam-wall having risen several feet the normal fall that works the machinery had been reduced from 24—25 feet to 18 feet and a corresponding reduction in power had resulted.

This very important and costly electric enterprise possesses a big field of utility before it which, at present, is only in its infancy. The area of power supply licensed to the company by the administration

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covers close on 700 square miles. It includes Therika, Thika township district, Ithanga Hills, and stretches north to the far side of Fort Hall.

The company has obtained by affiliation another fall on the Maragua river even greater than the one at present being operated. This will be able to generate 2,000H.P. and its head works are already completed. When in working order the two stations are to be joined up and will, together, supply power to meet all the local industrial requirements in sight for many years to come. At the present moment four factories are being operated by electricity generated in the existing power-house of the Thika Sisal Company, Limited.

One cannot regard a description of this interesting property as complete that fails to mention the elaborate, detailed methods employed in its office for checking expenditure, costs of production, output of fibre, electric current, etc. Apart from a very complete and fool-proof voucher system for paying the native workers, a series of graphic charts is worked out and kept up-to-date on all the important matters that go to make a concern of this involved character either a prosperous and enviable success or a disappointing failure.

When I asked how the expenses of production compared with gross returns in the fibre department a sheet resembling a hospital patient's temperature chart was promptly put under my nose. From this I was able to see with extreme rapidity the steady decline within the last two or three years in cost of production from a frequently unprofitable expenditure to a present quite satisfactory outlay placing the product f.o.b. Mombasa. The same illuminating system dealt with native employment and other economic subjects. Indeed this plan of office supervision by means of charts impresses one as a valuable and essential addition to the book-keeping of every important industry or business.

Only three whitemen are employed on this property. When one remembers that 250 acres of sisal are planted and the same area of old work-out sisal is reclaimed yearly, 300 acres of maize sown and reaped twice annually, 50 acres of coffee kept in good order and harvested, 1,500 acres of sisal always being cleaned, cut and carted, a big factory operated and the important electric supply interests of the company attended to, it will be seen that their jobs, and especially that of the manager, is no sinecure.

A Pioneer in Sisal.

I was fortunate enough to meet on this property the pioneer of sisal in Kenya, Mr. Swift; whose prolonged endeavours to get going at something that would bring in a return and keep the hyena from the door resulted in the establishment of this industry in the Thika to Fort Hall countryside. The history of this gentleman's—and his partner's—early struggles would make an interesting chapter of Kenya life by itself. He has walked into Nairobi and back to his home, 40 miles each way, a hundred times in the old hard-up days. He is to-day out of the worst of his trials and has the good wishes of all who know him that he will live to be a wealthy man.

Commander Lawford is one of Kenya's successful naval settlers; and we have none better, once the sharpness that comes from years of command under a discipline that exacts immediate, unquestioning obedience has toned down to the more easy-going tolerance of patient, civil life. For some years this settler served in the administration as a District Commissioner, acquiring thereby an intimate knowledge of the Colony, its natives and their languages that must be of

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great value to him in his present position. During the War he returned to the Navy; to-day he has all he possesses in sisal and has staked his future on this product.

Most of the labour on the Thika Sisal Co., estate comes from the Kavirondo Reserve, the powerful frames and working qualities of these big, Nilotic Natives rendering them more suitable for this fibre crop than their slender Kikuyu relatives. A curious incident showing the need for tactfully handling these tribal labourers occurred during my stay. A man dropped dead, when returning from work with 200 of his fellows, from natural causes. But death is never natural in the eyes of wild peoples. So after a long conference amongst the relatives of the deceased, a determined attempt was made to inculpate a member of another tribe as the real dealer of death, on grounds and evidence quite unacceptable in an European Court.

(d) Athi and Thika Rivers.

Like some fabled Beulah-land of hope and comfort, the tall avenues of Magagoni, Mr. Oulton's 5,000 acre property situated on a noble self-contained rise or plateau lay tantalisingly in sight, green as the garden of the Lord, for at least an hour whilst I sloshed towards it through the mud of a thoroughly wet day. My route ran for several miles along the main Ithanga Hills track, north of the Thika River which had been swollen to flood proportions by recent rains; and further torrential downpours had been falling from an early hour.

Half-way to my destination, soaked to the skin, and almost frozen to my mule, I had sought asylum with a hospitable white settler whence, after a complete change and rest, I resumed my journey warm, refreshed, and invigorated. From that hour forward no rain fell on me, though the entire horizon was blotted out by the heavy precipitation taking place in every direction.

A patch of blue sky kept steadily above, reminding me of the recorded and far more wonderful experience of a missionary author in this neighbourhood, some years ago, who tells his British public that, when nearly perishing of thirst in the adjacent Athi Plains during the dry season, a little cloud formed above him in answer to prayer and spouted cool and refreshing moisture for a few yards around his person as he travelled along the otherwise parched track. Not having presumed to ask for Divine interference on my special behalf in the normal progress of the rainy season, I was correspondingly grateful for the respite vouchsafed me.

As I crossed the strong, well-built Thika bridge, alongside the estate of Posho, Ltd., and felt that I was at length across my Jordan within only a mile or two of my destination, I ventured—it must be admitted, in a somewhat husky, wavering voice—to troll out a verse or two of John Peel.

This was, however, a serious mistake. The alarmed guide disappeared into the adjoining scrub and I saw him no more; the patient, tireless mule that had carried me industriously all day shewed a desire to bolt, fortunately in the right direction; but worst of all, a beneficent Nature appeared to promptly give me up as an object worthy of further consideration. The blue patch of sky disappeared; the deluge closed in upon me once more; and I only just managed to reach the hospitable verandah of the homestead in time to escape the necessity of another change.

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Magagoni—12 miles east of Thika township—forms part of an important rib of Kenya Colony; for the ridge on which it is situated continues eastwards till, with but one or two breaks it reaches the Yatta plateau, when easy, little-broken country occurs to the Coast. North and south of this ridge, for many miles, flow parallel the Thika and Athi rivers respectively; and there is not much room for doubt that had the first surveyors of the Uganda Railway known of this long, natural thoroughfare, it would have been chosen as the route for the railway from Mombasa to Naivasha.

The cool, shingle-roofed, airy, bungalow buildings of Magagoni homestead stand at an elevation of 4,800 ft. on the apex of a tableland with gentle slopes falling away in every direction. Coffee plantations up to 10 or 12 years of age encircle them; and giant, shady, spreading, wild figs—carefully saved in the initial clearing—are dotted like the ancestral trees of some old English estate, about these slopes on every hand. Broad avenues of Grevillea Robusta intersect the spacious 1,000 acre mound of deep rich soil and a complete panorama of the surrounding country is to be obtained for fifty or a hundred miles; except on the south side where the massive broadside elevation of Donyo Sabuk replaces and obstructs the more distant vista of the Athi Plains.

Like all the area of which it forms part this farm is fine fruit-growing country. The chief novelty that caught my eye in the garden was a cashew-nut tree in bearing; a handsome, very ornamental growth with as many economic qualities to it as the English walnut, for it produces fruit, nuts, a medicine, a dye, and a gum equal to arabic.

The 150 acres of coffee have been spaciously planted 12 ft. x 12 ft. Cultivation of any kind amongst the rows is therefore easily carried on; and the whole area lends itself to conversion to the Agobiada system of culture, which the owner is seriously thinking of adopting. A fine natural spring near the homestead enables pulping to be attended to close by. A novel, inexpensive home-made drying house has been erected and is working satisfactorily, turning out half a ton of dry parchment every two days. It consists of an immense tray with small meshed wire-netting bottom, that has been placed on top of a very large white-ant hill with a furnace let into it on one side. The whole is covered by a well-thatched roof.

At the time of my visit the red of ripening berries was visible on all sides and the picking of a very heavy crop had already begun. A hundred acres of maize, already four to six feet high were growing in adjoining paddocks; and an alternate area of 150 acres will be prepared for the Xmas or shorter rainy season. Nearly two hundred acres of sisal have been planted on another part of the estate.

An interesting scheme for supplying green, nitrogenous manure to the coffee is being experimented with. Beans, of which the estate produces large quantities, are sown thickly between the bushes and either ploughed in, or cut when immature, to form a mulch. The rainfall recorded here, averages for some ten years past, about 45 inches per annum. This year, however, up till the month of May, 35 inches have already fallen.

It is Mr. Oulton's intention to sub-divide two or three thousand acres of this property, which is pre-eminently suited for coffee.

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growing, plant up a small area on each block and sell at reasonable prices to newcomers.

Water Power Potentialities.

Reference has already been made to the remarkable character, as a natural highway from the coast, of the great ridge upon which Magagoni is situate. That it should have been the main route for the Uganda Railway, is the considered opinion of responsible and experienced surveyors who have examined it. But there is another and perhaps even more cogent reason, only just becoming apparent, why a great future, that must inevitably attract or facilitate transport of all kinds, is dawning for this district.

On either side of this long strip of country nature has concentrated within a fairly short distance a very considerable accumulation of cheap energy that, although now running to waste as it has been through the ages, is in the near future going to be turned to the service of humanity. The bulk of this water power is assembled on the boundaries of Mr. Oulton's property. It has been estimated by expert engineers that something like fifty thousand horse-power can be obtained close to or upon his boundaries from the two rivers, only a couple of miles apart, north and south of Magagoni.

The watersheds of these streams cover hundreds of square miles in the more elevated highlands at their back, extending westward, through heavy rainfall country, as far as Ngong Hills—including the whole Athi Plains—in one direction and to the Kinangop or Aberdares in another. Ocular demonstration was afforded me of the capacity of this great catchment area, for during my stay all the rivers were in flood and the great Athi Bridge to Donya Sabuk area was awash to the lamposts rails. The settlers living on that side were completely cut off and all the approaches to this 20-ft. high structure had been carried away.

The strong-flowing Thika alone drops 827 feet in three and a half miles on the confines of Magagoni; and every indication points to the estate being the potential centre of a great, smokeless, intensive, model, modern industrial African Birmingham or Manchester, the manufactured products from which will be silently and expeditiously carried away on trains worked by the same power that renders it possible for the goods to be economically made here.

Even our economically inexpert Colonial Office administration, with all their shibboleths which dope their consciences in their struggle against rapid, unhindered human progress through the instrumentality of the wealth-producing, working Whiteman in Kenya, reel before the shadow of a coming era of unparalleled African industrial development that is to-day falling across these vales and the entire wold of Thika and Athi. A curious vacillation as to the course of the projected railway to the north is observable.

Where the governments of Canada or Australia would unhesitatingly direct railway expansion so as to tap a district of immense commercial importance such as this at its kernel our authorities seem merely to dimly presage one of their usual mistakes if they avoid, as they are inclined to, going through the natural centre of this scene of future manufacturing activity and dynamic power.

A financially powerful company has already been formed to operate here; and indeed it aims to unite in one great combination all the water-power possibilities of the Colony. The writer holds no brief for these big monopolistic concerns, but

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believes them sometimes economically necessary in the public interests, provided the rights and general welfare of the community are wisely and fairly safeguarded. The E. A. Power and Lighting Co., Ltd. will have a preliminary capacity of 3,000 kilowatts, with all necessary appurtenances. Linked up with and absorbing the Nairobi Electric Lighting Company, it will run a main line through to Kenya's capital, supplying cheap power and light both there and to all surrounding districts. The same company has secured also the rights of electric light and power supply for Eldoret, Nakuru and Mombasa.

It is expected that the first power station adjacent to Mr. Oulton's land will be running next year; for in one place a natural channel about 150 yards long occurs which provides a fall on the Thika of 127 feet and this can be quickly and inexpensively utilised. The full scheme will however cost £100,000 and provide 40,000 to 50,000 volts; being controlled at a Power House 36 miles from Nairobi. It will then be possible to economically transmit power within a radius of fifty miles.

Magagoni is likely to have an important history before it; even as that of its owner, since he came to East Africa twenty-five years ago and has hardly left the country even for a holiday since, is full of interest and value to the newcomer. In harmony with many others amongst Kenya's first flight of pioneers the land attractions of the Colony had little or nothing to do with his arrival here. Mr. Oulton as a telegraphist in the Telegraph Battalion of the R. E.s came to B. E. A. prior to the outbreak of the South African War, having volunteered for construction and operating of the telegraph line ahead of the Railway then being built into the heart of darkest Africa. But where nearly all his contemporary companions hastened to get back to the crowded competition of the old country from a land of promise they were too myopic to appreciate, and are long since dead, this exception, with a modest capital of £50 stayed on, assured doubtless by an instinct inherited from sound, midland farming stock, and decided to start his modest home here. He sent for, and married at Mombasa, the girl of his choice; and after a few years on his Ngong property these two stalwarts have brought up their family of healthy children in the Thika district at the comparatively low altitude where lies their splendid estate.

No finer stamp of settler has been attracted to Kenya than this couple; and Mr. Oulton's success, for a man who had all his agricultural and stock experience to gain after his arrival here, has been amazing; until the currency bungle and post-war depression called a halt to his progress. Few men did better service for the Allies in Equatorial Africa than this ex-Royal Engineer. For his hand had not lost its cunning, and when hostilities broke out he was in the field again within the first week of war, laying his wires into the enemy's country. The Belgians borrowed him for their Congo campaign, when in despair with the slowness of their own telegraphists who were putting down eight or ten kilometres per month only. Captain Oulton astounded the Belgian staff and earned the personal thanks of their generalissimo by running through in one specially urgent instance sixty miles of working wire, poles, insulators and all complete in four days.

This settler, in spite of all the vicissitudes of an active life in coloured countries, is still young and vigorous in appearance, with a straight figure and undimmed blue eyes. Quite recently he ascended Kenya with Dr. Arthur's party to within 500 feet of its summit.

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His dear helpmeet has doubtless contributed materially both to his financial and personal well-being, yet, humorously enough—and many a true word is spoken in jest—attributes their general good fortune to a quarter-century of total abstinence. But then Mrs. Oulton is one of those grand old-fashioned women who has made the Englishmen of this generation. By ceaseless loving care, well-directed domestic industry and a gentle self-sacrifice that fortunately often brings its reward in this world, she has loyalty studied her husband and mothered her family of white children to adolescence, to carry on our traditions through the dangers that beset our race here; a life-work which, though less directly profitable than rearing white Leghorns, poodles, or Persian cats, will at least seem to some of us a nobler undertaking.

By no means the least attraction around Magagoni are the sylvan beauties of the Thika and Athi rivers, with their ever tumbling, foaming falls and rapids. There can hardly be a spot on earth fuller to the mile of delightful picnicing places; and the banks, with their attendant woods, are so spacious that a London Bank holiday crowd might find elbow room and secluded resting places along these stretches of rushing waters. The fascination of these surroundings have always drawn me to them whenever fortune has brought me within their ambit. On several memorable occasions I have spent the best part of a restful day in the cool shadows of the Thika's or Athi's umbrageous valleys, lying listlessly at full length and gazing on the never ceasing flow of murmuring waters. These streams are well worth knowing; whether one makes their acquaintance in the dry season, when it is possible to traverse them in some places over giant boulders and dykes of primordial granite and trap, or when the great floods arise and the banks seem to tremble under the struggle of raging waters combined with the thud of charging trees, uprooted and running amok amongst their stabler relatives. At the time of my present visit the great Athi bridge was two or three feet under water and a tawny flood half a mile broad was pressing against it with an insistent demand for its surrender and collapse. Some day not far distant, I venture to prophecy, this area will be a favourite play ground of Nairobians.

(c) Types of Small Thika Properties.

It must not be supposed that the Thika district entirely consists of big syndicated estates or is only suitable for joint-stock enterprises. Sisal certainly needs a large area and output in order to keep up a rotation that will most economically give employment to a full-sized factory plant. But even sisal is quite susceptible to successful operation in small blocks under the co-operative system, if either the Administration or private finance was practically sympathetic towards the profitable encouragement of the white settler with little means. The essential point in any scheme of this sort will always be a guarantee as to minimum annual output of leaf; and holdings would have to be occupied subject to the fulfilment of this guarantee.

When it comes to coffee-growing and general crops, however, Thika offers wide scope for the normal farmer; for there is no lack of fertility wherever a reasonable depth of soil can be obtained.

My first visit to lone-hand cultivators coming under this category was to Mr. Fooks, a fierce specimen of the Afrieander Boer—but withal as white a man as can be found in Kenya and a delightful host—who fought against

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the British in the South-African war and to-day is a prosperous settler, living comfortably from the proceeds of his estate and educating his children in the Colony.

His old white-bearded father—now retired—took up the property close upon twenty years ago, arriving in the country with little else than a practical knowledge of pioneering life—including the patient doggedness this experience engenders—his family, and a pocketful of assorted citrus pips.

During his early struggles to make good, a living income was obtained from the 18 to 20 acres of oranges and lemons he planted on a river-flat under dry-irrigation conditions, supplemented by transport work. Indeed these now mature fruit-trees, some being quite 25 feet high, are probably the oldest in the Highlands; and most of Nairobi's citrus supply has been drawn from this orchard during the last decade. To-day there are in addition 90 acres under coffee. In general farming, maize yielding an average of 8 to 12 bags per acre, beans 15 to 18 bushels, wheat 15 bushels, and good oats, have also been, or are being grown.

Mr. Fecks took his part in the recent war; and the fact that he refused to apply for an ex-soldier farm at its close shows the manner of man he is. He is satisfied to develop his own property of 1,200 acres; and, knowing there were not enough farms to go round for the landless men, stood aside. For 17 years he, his wife and family, have lived at Thika, where the elevation of his home is 4,890 ft., under climatic conditions similar to Fort Ternan, except that the average rainfall here is about 37 inches.

Centre of Hospitality.

This one-man property, surrounded by a series of big estates, which include the Thika Sisal Co., Ltd. (7,500 acres), Posho Ltd. (5,000 acres), Kititu Ltd. (5,000 acres), Kakusi (5,000 acres), Punda Milia and various others, is however not alone. Major Claudet, an energetic coffee grower, is alongside; and close by in a northerly direction Mr. Smart, a Sussex farmer, recently settled with his family on a nice piece of soil and has already proved the mettle of his pasture by getting in a good area of coffee, after ploughing his land with that care and thoroughness which is a feature of the practical English cultivator.

To all these Mr. Fecks is a centre of hospitality and information. Around his table I have met veterans of the South-African struggle, belonging to both of the contending sides, but comrades in the last war, and listened with interest to the friendly reminiscences of the old fighters as they drank their sundowners amicably together—now fellow pioneers in another and later whiteman's expansion.

I was much impressed too by a young Dutch lad from the sub-continent whom I met here; for he reminded me of indomitable struggling whitemen it has been my lot to know in Australasia and Canada and who are usually excluded or at least discouraged here. Landing in Kenya at 17 without any means he has worked hard and already owns at 20 years two full teams and wagons. He is making a good income from transport work that should put him on his own property before he is 25 years of age and he is as hard as nails.

Some miles further on I chanced on an old acquaintance, Mr. Shawver, who is to-day manager for the B. K. A. Fibre Co., Ltd., a sisal concern. Here again is a practical man of the most reliable type, whose one sore point against Kenya is that, having served dur-

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the late war in the local forces he is not to-day in possession of an ex-soldier farm—for, as happened to three out of four, he drew blank in the local lottery, while the London lottery had more farms than were applied for by men who had not previously seen East Africa.

Mr. Shawyer's career in Africa shows how well this continent may serve sober intelligent men who are not afraid of work and know how to take care of themselves. A Bristol man who served 12 years as Royal Navy stoker, a portion of his time being spent on H.M.S. "Ringaroma" of the Australian Navy, he was just time-expired when the Boer war broke out, so fought as a trooper throughout that struggle. Then he settled in South Africa and became a leading steam ploughman (Fowler's plant), amassing considerable property by sheer industry.

The German war caused him to volunteer for the S. W. Africa campaign; and he came on later to East Africa when that expeditionary force was disbanded. What men the Old Country breeds at times! To-day, he is a hardy, middle-aged, level-headed man with considerable private means from his savings; and he has reduced the cost of ploughing and planting steal on the estate he is managing to 13s. per acre. Labour as well as fighting is in his blood and he will at any time take a jembie and break land with his natives if he thinks they are not doing their proper daily task or wants to know if the work is extra hard. The Company he serves is fortunate to have secured such an employee.

Westward of the Blue Posts Hotel and the northern road towards Fort Hall, but within the Thika district, lies an extensive section of more elevated country consisting of very pretty, fertile undulating coffee land. Two rivers intersect this area, the Chania and Thika. Known to me years ago before it had been closely sub-divided I gladly accepted an invitation to go up in this direction and see the advance made in its development.

Moronguro, where I visited, is the property of Mr. and Mrs. Holmberg and contains 568 acres; 220 acres being under coffee, all established within the last four or five years. The altitude is 5,400 feet above sea level, and the neighbourhood, being nearer the mountainous country which comprises Kinangop and the Aberdares than the rest of Thika, has a rainfall of at least 40 inches annually. The Thika river borders the farm on one side.

This family belongs to Scandinavia and is of that fine Nordic blood, so closely related to the British, whence comes some of our most energetic, practical and successful white settlers. Certainly the coffee plantations were in the pink of condition — beautifully pruned, not a weed to be seen and ripening for a heavy crop, where reaching maturity. A substantial stone house nearly completed, is already advanced sufficiently for night residential purposes; but roomy, airy outbuildings form the living and eating quarters at the moment.

Acres of lawn, ornamental trees or shrubs and flower beds surround the homestead site; while views of neighbouring farmsteads, and more diversified distant country complete the beauty of these environs. It would be difficult anywhere in Kenya to surpass this place for the various factors that make an estate attractive to the normal human being, namely, money making, home making, healthiness, climate and scenery.

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Kenya's White Women.

The astonishing capacity that Kenya brings out in some of its white women — thanks to the atmosphere of order and respect towards our race that white men have established amongst natives in the Colony — was vividly impressed upon me here. Mrs. Holmberg has no ambition to take her husband's place or do his work on the estate and really prefers to attend to her house and family interests; yet during his recent absence for a month or two she managed by herself the entire enterprise satisfactorily, in all its details, from allotting the daily tasks to signing tickets of native labourers every evening. During this period she mounted her horse every morning before breakfast; going round the plantations to see work was proceeding smoothly; and the rest of the day was usually seen outside in the open at some useful supervisory occupation.

At the time of my call she was assisted by a couple of natives, enthusiastically and cleverly manipulating an oil engine, used for grinding posho and other necessary chores the mechanism of which she has learnt to understand. In what other overseas colony or dominion of the Empire could a woman live safely alone and undertake tasks like this with similar ease and comfort?

And with what a pleasant prospect of prosperity in the near future is pioneering life undertaken under these conditions in this delightful climate. It is no exaggeration to say that the compact little estate of Morongaro should easily bring in if the present quite normal price of coffee maintains, a nett income of £4,000 per annum to the lucky owners when the plantations already growing reach maturity.

(f) The latest Sphere into which White Expansion has found its way.

Kakuzi Hills.

Twenty odd miles east of Thika lies a rampart of hills that only a year or so ago was practically a terra incognita; a no-man's-land still in the occupation of the more formidable game, carnivora and vermin indigenous to East Africa.

To-day the Kakuzi Hills, with their 40-inch rainfall, are settled, sparsely it is true, from the end that looks south past the abrupt eastern slope of Douyo Sabuk across the Athi Plains as far as the Mua Hills, to their northern terminus of detached eminences; whence Fort Hall, the rugged Nyeri country and great Kenya itself may be viewed beyond a vast weald of flat bush veldt, broken valleys and open prairie.

In these hills the settlers, with few exceptions, are occupying and developing ex-soldier farms; and their activities are creating a continuous barrier of the greatest value to the older settled Thika area for a distance of 30 or 40 miles; closing thereby ingress to the western districts for diversified multitudes of wild animals with their attendant diseases. These have been wont, for ages past, to sweep upwards from the immense lower Tana plains and, crossing the still unoccupied Ithanga Hills, invade at certain seasons of the year firstly, the Kakuzi range and thence the Thika territory.

Where but a couple of years ago the rhino rampaged, buffalo blundered about in strong herds, zebra wheeled in mobile squadrons, and lion hunted in family parties, the plough is now preparing extensive areas of the phenomenally rich land for economic crops.

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In order to witness personally this signal and memorable triumph of the whiteman over the lower mammalia and inanimate Nature in all its newness, I proceeded one fine, sunny afternoon, via Thika station and a somewhat immature motor and wagon road, to the Kakuzi Hills.

Sisal and Coffee.

On a spacious slope of the extreme southern end of this range and in a recently finished stone house, at an elevation of 5,200 feet, I slept luxuriously for a night under the roof of Mr. Hearle, manager of the Hiram Craven Plantations; which include Kakuzi sisal and coffee lands and Kituamba, formerly known as Posho Ltd., another large sisal property—in all 11,000 acres. Of this area 2,300 acres are already under sisal; the scheme aimed at being an annual cutting of 500 acres with an output each year of 1,600 tons of fibre. This may, in the future, be raised to 1,000 acres of sisal leaf per annum if all goes well with the industry.

One hundred acres of coffee have also been planted and look very forward, the assaults of the Antestia bug, which has made its appearance here, being kept well in check by smoking each bush in turn and trapping the parasite. Some £60,000 to £70,000 have been expended on this group of plantations but the soil is so rich, the climate so forcing and the crops, concentrated thereon, such well-known and valuable world staples that this outlay is clearly justified; and may reasonably be expected to pay thirty to fifty per cent, to the wealthy owner within a very few years.

The manager, a capable and keenly active Cornishman, impresses one as being, together with his assistant, a shrewd and efficient Australian, quite competent to run this extensive nest of estates with a minimum of unremunerative expenditure into the harbour of gilt-edged securities.

I was up betimes next day for a general look round in the bracing, infinitely sweet air of sunny morning on these hills. Not less than a hundred miles away, but a mere shadowy outline in the refulgence of the shining east, lay Kitui, a detached piece of highlands where centres the administration for a numerous native population and much northern desert trade. All the uncultivated country I could see beneath me was open forest—not unlike a gigantic Richmond Park viewed from a balloon.

A billowy sea of snow-white mist softly covered and levelled up the deepest depressions, laving rising shores of luxuriant pasture, bright emerald under the blue sky and clear, cloudless sunshine of the upper atmosphere. Near by, across a huge gulf of almost Dantesque deepness, lay the southern tail of the Ithanga Hills, forming another great and quite distinct range still further east that runs parallel with the Kakuzi Chain. The Ithangas melt away into a series of abrupt crags, known as the Needles, in the Wakumba Reserve; and many miles behind the latter the firm line of the precipitous Yatta escarpment is visible on the horizon. To the west lie the main highlands, amongst which Neong Hills, Kinangop, Limuru and Kyambu may be located; while at night the flickering lights of Nairobi beckon and wave invitingly to those who hanker for the busy haunts of men, the Pictures and the cosy hotel bars.

After breakfast a tour of the nearest plantations gave a vivid impression of the rapid progress being made by both sisal and coffee towards a productive maturity in this forceful climate. Maize crops going fifteen bags to the acre were reaped here last harvest. A good deal of the yellow Chester County variety is grown, for it is known to make a more nutritious meal on which to feed the natives' labour than the white horse-tooth kinds.

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At the coffee factory some excellent quality of parchment coffee was drying in trays. Substantial stone huts were being built for the native workers who once they take possession, are encouraged to keep up a decent standard of cleanliness. In these Hills, on the edge of the volcanic overlay that marks the Highlands, basic granite emerges; and the alluvial sub-soil from this formation provides in the valleys a natural plaster or cement of the greatest value in house construction.

After Kakuzi Estates I continued my pilgrimage northwards, across a countryside reminiscent of the Mua Hills and Trans Nzoia; but lying at least 1,000 feet lower in altitude. A ribbon of track runs from end to end along the base of these hills like a fillet of auburn velvet; and from this road it is conveniently possible to visit each farm in turn. Major C. G. Risley's ex-soldier B farm, Matunguru, 1,100 acres, neighbours the Hiram Craven estates. His partner, Capt. E. T. R. Wickham, is still on the active list in India. Ample, airy and comfortable buildings comprise the homestead which stands with a commanding westerly view high up in the hills, but at a spot easily reached by motor-car, via the broad drive already constructed through an initial block of 60 acres of young coffee. The graceful and useful banana has been plentifully planted amongst this area for shade, and another similar space has been cleared ready for ploughing back of the homestead.

All through this district, thanks to the favourable conditions of climate and soil, obtaining coffee berries are produced at two years and a quite appreciable return per acre is harvested before the third year. I even met one careful soul who was carrying his first year's crop—from fifteen month-old coffee—in a pill-box in his waistcoat pocket. It consisted of two rubicund, plump berries.

Plenty of evidence is forthcoming to show that this is probably a half ton of cleaned coffee to the acre country when the bushes mature; and it is interesting to note that while three years ago the only coffee in this part of Kenya amounted to 40 acres—on Kakuzi Estates—at least 430 acres are today under this crop and not less than 1,000 acres are projected for near future planting.

Like so much of Kenya's Highlands the Kakuzi Hills area is too fertile for any but rich men to develop in large areas. The usual mistake here has been made in handing out blocks far too extensive for rapid and complete development and the process of sub-division or sale is taking place all along this fine range. As a result of this policy much land lies undeveloped or has reverted to Government although there are still considerable numbers of seasoned, landless, struggling ex-soldiers in the Colony looking for homes, who failed to draw farms in the local lottery. It has lately been rumoured, however, that all unalienated blocks are to be distributed amongst time-expired, sedentary civil servants in lieu of pensions!

A Satisfied Settler.

Major Risley, who belongs to the Indian Cavalry, is very satisfied with his farm on which there are 500 acres of potential coffee land and he must have worked hard and continuously to reach his present forward state of development. He is adopting the contour system for future planting and has established a store on his property. Though not a mechanic he was installing an engine at the time of my visit.

The wise provision has already been made on Matunguru of establishing a five-acre plot of flourishing young blue gums to supply fuel when the natural timber within convenient distance to the homestead has been exhausted. A three-acre orchard and good vegetable garden

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6,800 ft. elevation. This farm is in fact detached from the main Kikuzi Hills and occupies the whole of a long hill that appears to be an offshoot or break away therefrom. Here great activity is being displayed by the energetic owner and a considerable area is already planted with coffee, or ploughed by tractor ready for next rains.

I stayed a week-end with this pleasant, interesting and practical Shropshireman who gained his experience during a residence of several years in the Muhuroni district; and this period of leisure gave me time to wander over the northern end of the farm—generally along one or other of the hard packed buffalo trails. These form excellent footpaths of easy gradients up and down the hillsides overlooking the Tana Plain; reminding me of the bison tracks that seamed the prairies of Saskatchewan and Alberta when I first crossed them in a bucksail wagon or prairie schooner a good many years ago.

On Sunday morning my host and I descended the face of a mighty slope quite a thousand feet to the coffee nursery situated on the Kiboko river in delightful, if sultry, sylvan surroundings at an elevation of 3,000 ft. Here coffee seedlings thrive in the black, sandy, potting soil; chillies grow like weeds; colobus monkeys swarm in the surrounding woods; and an extensive, shady pool—that fascinated me after my climb as a most inviting and innocent-looking bathing place—is known generally to contain a crocodile of unusual size and ferocity. The whole surroundings of this nursery form an old buffalo haunt into the 6-ft. grass of which one could only venture at imminent risk to life and limb a year or two ago.

Northwesterly from Mr. Eardley's, beyond a deep ravine, was visible, only three miles as the crow flies, the castellated towers of that fine sportsman, Colonel Leny's home, situated on a circular, coffee planted hill; which may be perhaps regarded as the final and most northerly outpost of Kakuzi Hills. To the right of this estate extends a long broad ridge of richest coffee land, belonging to the Charlesworth brothers, a group of serious, hard-working settlers, terminating in an abrupt break-away to the Tana Plain, 2,000 ft. below, and known as Land's End.

As I looked across to those beckoning plantations the inspiration came to me that if it were possible to synchronise a visit to the former with the pole matches and Nairobi races, just about to be held, the problem of my return to town would be solved. It was not long before I found myself craving admission at the hospitable door of Colonel Leny—late 16th. Lancers—who, with his son, is painstakingly and successfully creating a model property of 300 acres of coffee on a compact and most desirable 450 acre farm.

My design to desert this interesting countryside, as a stowaway in the motor-car of one of its settlers worked out with complete success. The morrow saw me regretfully whirled through the pleasant land of Sisalia, usually called Thika, to Nairobi from one of the most charming and attractive districts in the Colony; the pioneers of which are among the keenest, most neighbourly and most hospitable I have met in any new or old country and who have, I verily believe, an enviable and prosperous future before them.

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CHAPTER VIII.

ISOLATED DISTRICTS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE.

(a) Fort Ternan.

Perhaps the greatest natural, instinctive, physical craving of those condemned to toil in the dull cloudiness of northern European towns and in the murky conditions belonging to the great Old Country industrial centres, is for sunlight. How they long to get away on to some sun-drenched beach or grassy hill and soak in it until they feel themselves permeated with the health-giving rays and their anaemic bodies gathering vitality from the wholesome heat.

It is curious that while some doctors of an older school are obsessed with hostility for the sun's rays, even to the extent of living in a gloomy sort of twilight themselves in their own homes, the latest discoveries of medical research favour increasingly a graduated exposure of the body to direct solar influence as a cure for a number of stubborn diseases and constitutional defects. Thus men's puny opinions revolve or fluctuate, like the fashions; though the great gifts of Nature and life remain eternally the same, if people will take them and use them properly, even though temporarily misused or misunderstood. To-day the healing profession is on the eve of a boom in rational sun worship.

One cannot help thinking of this feature of life in the twilight countries when one gets out of the train at Fort Ternan and plunges into the strong, all pervading warmth of its sunshine. In a mere hour or two one has left behind the bracing, Yorkshire-moorlike breezes of boisterous Mau Summit, passed through Londiani with its fresh climate that reminds one of the Essex coast, deserted the relaxing Bournemouth warmth of Lumbwa township and arrived at conditions resembling Teneriffe on a summer's day; when an excursion up the mountain roads brings a free perspiration out on the energetic voyageur, keen to stretch his legs after the confinement of the rail journey.

My visit to this pleasant, fertile district was rendered all the more agreeable because I was met on the station by a settler who owes his establishment here—though this was the first I had heard of it—to a description I wrote of Fort Ternan some years ago. He gave me the double satisfaction of a hearty welcome and an assurance that my account of the beauties, climatic advantages and economical possibilities of the countryside had been fully substantiated by his experience since he came here; and he desires to exchange his farm and district for no other place.

The oldest resident pioneers of this fine district are the brothers Ross, who came here in 1908, when an impression existed that one was courting death from malaria and blackwater by taking up land in this warm climate. For years after they settled their occasional appearance in good health and spirits on a

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been planted; and I also came across a flourishing brood of ducks, of which the sole proprietary rights pertain to the eldest son of this settler, a keen poultry fancier aged nine.

Major Risley's example, enthusiasm and success are already attracting the interest of fellow-officers in the Indian Army to Kakuzi Hills and Thika. Like several others in the neighbourhood this settler has his wife and family with him—indeed Mrs. Risley remained behind for some months in this, their new home, while her husband returned to India to complete his service for pension—and the presence of these add the necessary ingredient of homeliness and comfort to the whiteman's labours, permanently raising at the same time the standard of living, refinement and attractiveness throughout the settlement.

Every farm along this range goes back over the apex of the Kakuzi Hills, whose highest point is 5,400 feet above sea level, to the eastern slopes. The visitor never tires of visiting this divide and looking across the great fertile gorge and lower banks of the valley that separate this newly settled countryside from the shaggy, trackless area and prominent peaks of the upper Ithanga Hills. Numerous and permanent springs are found all along the western, but not on the eastern side of Kakuzi Hills; and even to-day at any time an invasion of buffalo, rhinoceros, lion or giraffe may, and occasionally does, occur; when these long-memoried creatures venture to scout the prospects of return to favourite stamping grounds, now wrested from them by human settlement.

The next settler along the eastern slopes of this range to afford me hospitality was Mr. G. C. Whitehead, a young married man who has lived and worked strenuously in Kenya without leaving the Colony since 1912. Here again I could not help noticing the sturdiness, intelligence, and energy of the first generation of young East Africans; also they have almost without exception a good complexion and colour that are seldom seen in seasonally high temperature countries like Australia.

Mr. Whitehead comes of that fine 1820 breed of South African pioneers which is leaving its mark indelibly throughout settled, civilised Africa. His splendid farm of 2,442 acres—named Kinengui after the only native who was ever known to live on these Hills before the whiteman's advent and was killed by a rhino—has made remarkable progress in the ten months of his occupation. Already he has 35 acres under coffee and 30 more ready to plant, off which, though virgin land, he has last season taken 10 bags of maize to the acre. With an area far too large for one man to develop he has acquired a partner in Mrs. Robertson, the wife of a Ceylon tea-planter; and at the time of my visit her son was due to arrive from British Columbia, where he has been fruit-farming.

Thence by traversing a shallow ravine, and within easy walking distance, I made my way to Mr. A. K. Cumming's 2,500 acre farm, Belingwe, which has just been divided up into two portions, one of which has been taken over by Mr. Combe. The healthy homestead of Mr. and Mrs. Cumming sits snugly on a breezy pass in the hills whence a wonderful view both east and west is obtainable; and across which Donyo Sabuk and Mount Kenia appear to have formed a nodding acquaintance, with each other. Far below to the westward the great, lightly afforested Tana Plain lies spread before one; and it is possible to trace the bed of the river which gives this vast area its name for many miles until its confluence with the Thika.

This territory and as far as the further ranges on the distant horizon—amongst which Embu can be

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located—is one of the finest natural Zoos in the world. The land itself is very rich and, except for an occasional timid excursion by the Masai in pre-whiteman days, has never been occupied by man. Some day it will doubtless be settled and produce in profusion the many forms of wealth which it is capable of yielding; but more intelligent methods of organised colonisation and co-operative development to those at present practised will have to be applied to this promised land.

Mr. Cumming is a veteran Anglo-African pioneer who belongs to the ever diminishing historic band of men that opened up Rhodesia under Rhodes and quelled the Matabele rebellion. Here he has come to anchor at last and is busy planting coffee—75 acres are already growing and 25 are ready to put in next rains—with an occasional excursion into the wild after big game. Mr. Combe, on the eastern end of this farm, has a Bates' steel mule (caterpillar type) at work breaking up 100 acres of virgin land for coffee. Beyond him in a south-easterly direction one catches sight, across the deep valley, of one or two patches of cultivation on the lower western slopes or foothills of Ithanga belonging to Colonel Patterson (manager Mr. Maxwell) and a Mr. Drake, both of whom own ex-soldier farms here.

From here I passed on to one of the most interesting enterprises in Kenya; for I found Mr. C. S. Rundgren, an enterprising and very courteous Swede, busily and successfully engaged in cutting up a single ex-soldier block (B. 605) into desirable farms, four out of the eleven being already disposed of. Three tractors are at work preparing coffee land for the newcomers, over 100 acres being planted; and 300 are ready for the short rains and will be under coffee by the end of the year. This property was probably the finest plum in the ex-soldier land lottery. Its total area of 5,000 acres contains literally thousands of acres of first-class coffee land. Every depression and many of the highest rises on it possess permanent springs.

Closer Settlement.

The whole estate faces and slopes west; and the enterprising owner is doing a service of considerable importance to the white community of Kenya by facilitating closer settlement here at reasonable prices. To place these blocks within reach of men with limited means he has boldly adopted the chief feature of the amended Swedish scheme that the Government of Kenya turned down in 1918.

After payment of a substantial deposit (35 per cent.) the balance is liquidated out of an annual moiety of the coffee crop, 100 acres of which are planted on every subdivision for prospective buyers. No finer private opportunity has ever been materialised in Kenya for the man who wishes to avoid the labours of primitive pioneering, and quickly bridge the period between expenditure and production. About 150 natives are already at work at good wages and under civilising conditions on this estate which probably never supported an African family before the whiteman's advent.

East of Mr. Rundgren's enterprice lies Kilima Kogi, Mr. W. Hardley's rich and ample property of 2,396 acres. The homestead, a substantial stone house, stands at

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visit to Nairobi or elsewhere was hailed with constant exclamations of surprise that they were still alive. When, however, one of the brothers married and his children also throve, other settlers began to come along and acquire land; and another reliable field for white-men's enterprise was added to Kenya Colony's growing list.

Fort Ternan is 5,104 feet above sea level at the station and has a rainfall of 48 inches per annum. To-day, settlement has taken place many miles west at lower elevations, much under this height, in the direction of the Lake. And though fever has been found in some places and one or two men have even died further down towards Kisumu, I can find no reliable traditions of any serious outbreak of malaria in the warm and salubrious neighbourhood of Fort Ternan. One thing is certain: the wealth-creating potentialities of all this lower country is so considerable that it is worthy of a little risk in opening it up; but there is no indication that the loss of life is ever likely to be as great as it was in the early stages of many now thoroughly settled, healthy districts belonging to North America, Queensland, or South Africa.

Messrs. Ross Brothers' homestead is close to the station and their farm consists of a series of rich sloping flats suited for ploughing and a considerable area of upland grazing, much of which is covered with boulders typical of the hills here. Hence the title "Rocky" Fort Ternan, the prefix having been added to its name by some sarcastic visitor in the past, who doubtless experimented in cross-country tramps. The pasture is nevertheless good on the hills; and, although all this territory, as far as the Lake, is an endemic East Coast Fever area, immune or dipped stock do well.

The country is a tumbled break-away from the higher ranges and tablelands of the general Highlands and may be described as a pocket Switzerland of rich valleys, locked in on three sides by fertile hill-sides and watered by innumerable springs and a few good-sized streams. The water power running to waste here would keep a considerable industrial centre busy. Limestone in vast quantities underlies some of the hills and the geological indications point to a break in the volcanic cap that covers most of the highland area of Kenya, as far east as Nairobi.

History.

Most of the land south of the railway between Fort Ternan station as far as Muhoroni was originally taken up by a syndicate of which Mr. J. H. S. Todd, to-day a well-known Nairobi business man, was one of the chief members. An interview with this gentleman enabled the writer to obtain some very interesting information concerning the early days of this district; and, inter alia, the history of the struggle put up by a few of the members of the syndicate embodies valuable testimony of the difficulties that the first pioneers in Kenya had to undergo.

The area in question, a portion of which has since been sold to some of the present settlers, was secured from the Land Office in 1904. All the members of the syndicate were at that time in South Africa. Nevertheless two practical men were engaged and sent to Kenya to commence development. Simsim and cotton were the first two crops sown; but the country was in a disturbed state and it was found impossible to get the necessary native labour to harvest them. This failure caused the syndicate to dissolve, it being decided, in view of the Land Office pressure, that the members must act individually in the matter of developing their holdings. Of these Mr. Stephens

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and Mr. Roos were the first to arrive on the land.

In 1905 Mr. Todd himself arrived in the country with two more Europeans to work on the estate. The cotton area was thereupon increased but was unremunerative owing to the continuance of native unrest. A crop of Hickory King maize put in this year on new land returned a yield of 20 bags to the acre.

In 1906 experiments were carried out with ramie; a few imported pure merino sheep were also secured and a small flock started by crossing the rams with native ewes. The ramie was found to be unmarketable and the merinoes proved to be quite unsuited to this rich, humid district.

Then came the Nandi campaign, and the party of pioneers was raided by the Nandi. They lost everything they had and were eventually forcibly escorted off the land by a squad of King's African Rifles not until 1908 were they permitted by the authorities to return to their task of pioneering experiment.

The next serious effort to produce a remunerative export crop—there were no local markets in those days—was made with ceara rubber. Two hundred acres of this economic tree were planted and £3,000 spent in this new plunge, which, however, also proved a failure. The trees grew beautifully, but did not produce enough latex to be of any commercial value.

By this time Mr. Todd, who was now practically the only member of the original syndicate left, was feeling somewhat discouraged and funds were running low. During his enforced absence he had invested the balance of his remaining capital in business and could not now afford further experiment. It must be remembered that no Agricultural Department worthy of the name or capable of giving any practical assistance to pioneers in their rich equatorial highland estates existed at that time; and settlers had no past experience in this, or any similarly situated country, to draw upon.

Nevertheless trying once more, the experimentalists came at last to their best venture when, in despair, they turned their attention to the bush that was already making a stir in other districts, and prepared to grow coffee. Arrangements were entered into for a supply of 300,000 young coffee plants and a big nursery was started. But the drain had been too long drawn out for the purses of the interested members to be able to stand the further delay and expenses inseparable from founding a successful coffee plantation—and this development collapsed. Mr. Todd still occasionally sells blocks of the Fort Ternan property when serious buyers come forward. He believes—with some justification, as the above narrative shows—that the subsequent successes made in this district are based largely upon the weary years of effort and endeavour that he and his friends went through.

Most of the names of the earlier pioneers of this district, as far as Muhoroni, are already either forgotten or a mere tradition to the present residents. They include Duda and Decks of Muhoroni; Hales, Stephens, Roos, Bradly, Sinclair, Patrick, and Smith of the Fort Ternan neighbourhood; all of whom contributed their quota—and some lost their lives—proving what crops the district could grow with commercial success.

But Mr. Todd still has the greatest faith in this countryside; is convinced of its exceptional healthiness; and recalls the important point that its stock-carrying capacity—a feature somewhat overshadowed to-day by the concentration on maize and coffee—has been recognised from time immemorial by the surrounding

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natives who were constantly contending for the privilege of grazing their stock in and around the valley in which the station now stands. Both Lumbwa and Nandi knew this area as the "fat land" and coveted it; not merely for its rich pasture but also for the salt licks with which it abounds.

Some three miles above the station Sir Charles Liston Foulis, Bart, has made his home and is busy planting coffee and developing a large well equipped coffee factory, with a capacity able to cater for cleaning the whole of this crop between Londiani and the Lake. There is indeed a movement afoot to take it over co-operatively.

With many years South African farming experience Sir Charles is a capable pioneer and has inaugurated some expensive and notable improvements on his property, especially in the matter of water power. I was permitted to walk up to his waterworks and follow the furrow to its head diversion. It takes off at a strong, brawling stream, and flows through exquisite forest scenery of exuberant bush interspersed with wild banana clumps, palms and creepers.

The coffee average in this district is quite 5 cwt. of cleaned berry to the acre. The maize average is generally 15 bags, though this year being unusually dry it is down to 12 bags of 200 lbs. each per acre—as compared to 3 to 4 bags that Sir Charles remembers averaging in South Africa.

Below Messrs. Ross Brothers' farm also south of the railroad, lies Mr. E. C. Firth's snug property. This consists, like the Ross' farm, of very rich flats and slopes, deposited by countless centuries of wash from the volcanic, boulder-strewn hills, and a considerable area of pasture. The lowest valleys of Mr. Firth's land descend to 4,600 ft.; his house is situated at 5,000 ft.—where the hottest days reach a temperature of 96 degrees in the shade.—on an admirable breezy site which he is beautifying with ornamental bushes. It possesses long views up and down the main valley and across to the great be-forested bulk of Mount Tindaret.

This settler, who has not been long in the district, has already 140 acres under cultivation, chiefly for coffee. Most of the planted area is coming on remarkably well; and further clearing is steadily proceeding. A fine mountain river runs through all the lands south of the line and a wonderful stand of bananas, citrus and other fruits has been developed on this property along the stream. The cultivation paddocks are carefully laid out and much trouble, expense and taste have been lavished in beautifying the roads and boundaries with ornamental trees.

Experimental Work.

Some useful experimental work is also being carried on here; notably in shade for coffee and the importation of tropical plants and trees of economic value, likely to acclimatise in this splendid climate. Amongst these are Sapodilla, sour sop, sweet sop, from the West Indies; persimmons from Japan; and cashew-nuts from the Coast. In addition, Mr. Firth has introduced this year the following famous economic fruits and plants: mangosteen, durien, lichi, bread-fruit, Jack fruit, rambutan, sandoricum, alburia, rose apple, vanilla, cardoman, averrha, camornoa, etc.

In shade trees for coffee the following are actually growing:—Albuzzia Molucana, Albuzzia lebek, Magule and Jamaican raintree. A quantity of that curious, stony-crop-like, local creeping herb Portalucca that makes a soft, handsome and protective natural carpet over the dark soil wherever exposed and unclothed by grass, is being used for covering the roads between avenues of ornamental trees.

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But Fort Ternan is not all sub-tropical by any means; though its main future lies perhaps in its warm sheltered valleys and lower slopes. Widely varying elevations can be had here as in so many districts of Kenya. North of the railroad almost any elevation up to 6,000 ft. may be obtained and a number of settlers are busy in this section of the countryside, growing coffee, sugar cane, dairying and stock-farming.

In order to make a completer survey of the chief farms on this rising, undulating moiety of the district, I crossed to north of the railroad at the western boundary of Messrs. Ross Brothers and entered the farm of Major Ayre Smith, two miles from the station. "Chep-la-quet," as this property is named, has an elevation of 5,000 ft. above sea level and an area of 327 acres. Two hundred acres can be put under the plough in one block to maize or coffee and this acreage is all within sight from the verandah of the house.

Sugar.

For Fort Ternan this is an unusually big stretch of arable land to get together in one piece; and it renders the farm a particularly easy and cheap one to run. Of this cultivable area 149 acres were under maize last year and yielded 297 tons of maize, or about 20 bags to the acre. I understand this yield attracted the attention of Mr. Holm, the Hon. Director of Agriculture, who enquired into and confirmed it.

Major Ayre Smith, who has acquired larger interests in the Trans-Nzoia, is arranging shortly to sell this valuable property and retire to that far-away district. Coffee will do well on this farm and a nursery has been established. Like many others up and down the line this settler was tempted to plant sugar cane, but when it came to buying, the big factory near Kisumu only offered Shs. 7/- per ton at its own siding—a sum that does not cover transport. This crop has therefore now been rooted out.

Leaving this pleasant homestead, with its pretty view down the valley and across to the green hills of the Lumbwa Reserve, I wandered eastwards through a country like the broken picturesqueness of Surrey around Haslemere, but glorified into even more vivid verdure by semi-tropical conditions and ample rainfall. All my further progress for the next day or two lay up-hill until I finally reached a point where the highlands of Fort Ternan and the hills of Lumbwa merge at over 6,000 ft. In this steady climb I was to find and visit many a charmingly-situated home—

"Like an eagle's nest perch'd on the crest of purple Apennine."

And I must add that the frank, unstinted hospitality and good fellowship extended to me through the whole of this countryside could not be exceeded anywhere.

My next place of call was at Murgut River Estate, managed by Mr. M. H. Atkins for the Executors of the late Commander Moncrieffe, covering an area of 900 acres and possessing 169 under coffee. Cultivation is carried on in broad sheltered valleys, which characterise the property, between steep grass-flanked hills; and up to half a ton of clean coffee has been harvested per acre from the mature sections.

An efficient factory, very well provided with first-class machinery, has been erected here and is well patronised by the locality, 170 tons of cleaned coffee having been dealt with during last season. Near by is an ingenious drying shed and store possessing a sliding roof and partitions so that sun and air may be quickly turned on or off in treating the coffee bean. The driving power is water, by means of an overshot water-wheel and there is an auxiliary oil engine.

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[illegible] classes of coffee are graded by a machine capable of dealing with five tons per day. The coffee is then hand picked and sorted on special tables. A double hulling machine made by John Gordon has been installed, together with a winnower by the same firm; the dust being conducted to water and carried away submerged without fouling the air of the factory. A special Gordon's Africa huller for buni is worked here for this refractory class of berry and fulfils its function excellently. One is interested to see brass cleats taken from the Konigsberg playing a useful role in the eminently peaceful spot. They are relics of Commander Moncrieffe's war service.

The surroundings of this practically-arranged and complete factory, which is situated on a strong flowing stream, are very sylvan and beautiful. What I thought at first was a many-hued bird of paradise on an overhanging branch near by turned out to be a brilliantly irridescent lizard that loves to sit and watch the incomprehensible human at work. And in between the foliage one catches a glimpse of a drying barbecue across the creek; where the fragrant bean, after treatment on the draining barbecue, is desiccated. This plan is worth recording for it minimises the employment of trays.

"Kabisa!"

An instance of the need to know the Swahili patois well or at least to see one is understood thoroughly by native employees was related to me here. The late owner ordered some of his boys to clean a patch of 15 acres of coffee "Kabisa" (which being interpreted means "entirely") and went his way. On his return he found he had been taken quite literally and all the coffee plants were, with everything else, weeded out!

Forty grade dairy cattle are depastured on Murgut River Estate and an area of first-prize Hickory King maize is grown annually for sale as seed.

Thence I made my way across the same type of pleasant diversified country, through Sir Charles Foulis' estate to Major Robertson's, at an elevation of 5,500ft., a small but very highly developed farm of 110 acres only. Of this 100 acres are under coffee, 45 being mature and expected to give half a ton per acre this year. The foliage of these bushes shows a healthier, more natural colour than some of the coffee at lower elevations. Much of this land has been carefully terraced with successful results. Denudation of soil by rain has thereby been prevented and a stronger growth of coffee ensured.

As in all this hilly area, and even more so down towards the next district of Koru, some damage from hail occasionally occurs and vestiges of a recent fall were apparent. The property takes in both sides of a length of perfect trout stream that rises in the hills above. This settler is experimenting successfully with a compost manure of cow-dung and wood ashes, of which he puts half a ton to the acre. A coffee nursery, market garden and citrus plantation are amongst the features of this place and the small coffee factory also possesses a stone paved, drying barbecue.

Major Robertson belongs to the true warrior breed of Briton and his personal record of active service is a fine one. He has not been out of Africa since 1897, previous to which he was two years in Canada. Nine of these years have been spent fighting; and he has managed to establish himself at Fort Ternan out of his savings. He holds a remarkable array of medals, including pre-war German, as well as French, and many British distinctions.

This dragon's tooth of a man is now quite settled down to peaceful pursuits and holds some valuable interests in the neighbourhood. He recently built a road here along 2½ miles of rocky hillside, with a rise of 1,000 ft. in it, which he completed

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in nine months at an expenditure of only £150. One wonders what this laborious piece of work would have cost if it had been done by the P.W.D.

A mile or two further along the rising valley road is situated the property of Captain Laurence, late K.A.R., with 450 acres of land, 125 (out of a possible 200 suited for coffee) being already planted. This settler produced in addition 1,200 bags of maize last year. The farm is a hilly one reaching down to and including a rich little valley with a permanent running stream in it. The hills here are excellent pasture and, though boulder strewn, can be turned into coffee land simply enough by terracing. Three feet or so down the floating stone, evidently peppered on to the surface by volcanic agency possibly a million years ago, gives place to deep red soil.

The property has both irrigation and water-power possibilities. An ingenious, comfortable type of house for the climate has been designed and built by the owner at 5,700 ft. altitude. It consists of a main hall or living rondavel of stone and cement, lofty, cool and capacious, from which a series of doors lead out to bedrooms, sitting-room, etc., neatly attached thereto. The coffee is of all stages of growth, and the mature section has so far averaged one ton of clean coffee to three acres.

An Experimental Planter.

From this homestead my sturdy, willing mule was called upon to negotiate a rise to Major Pringle's place—visible from the aforesaid farm—at 6,200 ft. The highest part of the property however reaches up another 500 ft. This is a very undulating estate and only an energetic, practical settler could be expected to develop it successfully. It has however fallen into good hands, for the present owner has spent many years planting in Java and possesses experience, vigour and imagination.

There must be between 300 and 400 acres on the estate suitable for coffee and Major Pringle, who began in 1917, has already planted 100 acres, 70 of which are in bearing, and has in all 220 acres under cultivation. From 30 acres of four-year-old bushes he has recently harvested eight tons. Some of the most interesting experiments in coffee planting to be found in Kenya are going on here.

To begin with, the straight lines of the normal plantation are now discarded altogether, and hill contour-planting favoured instead with good results. The plan facilitates measures being taken to prevent the washing away of soil by heavy rains. This is dealt with in an attractive manner by planting below each contour line of bushes a row of herbage which has the effect of catching the wash and gradually creating terraces from the accumulated silt. To-day miles of violets, baboo's delight and brilliant verbena are beautifying the property for this purpose; and the resulting contrast of colour renders the coffee areas strikingly pretty.

The owner also believes in shade and is putting in mucuna or seubania against sun and wind. I must own to experiencing a very strenuous few hours up and down this estate—but it was worth seeing; and I am not surprised to learn that Major Pringle has no difficulty in securing pupils when he wants them, to learn his successful and intelligent methods.

From these hills a fine view of the topmost country of Fort Tenan and Lumbwa is to be obtained. Two or three miles south on similar elevation and soil is the upper farm "Ravelston" of Sir Charles Fouth. On this 100 acres of coffee have been planted and the price received last year averaged £100 per ton gross. Adjoining this estate is "Colinton" with 45 acres of coffee, also in the same hands, the two

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farms together extending over 3,500 acres.

One very pleasant day of my stay at this centre was spent on the only ex-soldier farm that has been taken up in this district. It is situated right on the railroad. One more, alongside of it, was allotted to a London applicant who never troubled to come out, and it lies idle in consequence; though there are many East African ex-soldiers—a number of whom have been forced to leave the colony—who would have been happy to have been granted a quarter of it. The occupied one belongs to Capt. A. H. Hutchinson, an excellent farmer and a keen settler. Though the land is patchy, with the result that cultivation is scattered about in a number of separate blocks, there is a considerable area of arable soil on the 1,200 acres. The rest will, in due course and with the help of dipping, make fine dairying or stock fattening country.

Though the newest-developed farm in Fort Ternan, quite a few acres of coffee have already been planted, a considerable area is under maize, a solid, roomy stone house has been built, and much general improvement been carried out. It is not too much to say that, thanks to a favourable position on the railway, plenty of easily farmed land and his own industry, this settler has already turned the corner and made good.

But enough has been said in this long detailed description of Fort Ternan to prove its excellence and charm. It is a district that should carry a considerable population for the land lends itself to small intensive farming. Its ample water-power ought, in the near future, to attract industrial enterprise. One leaves it feeling that for health, comfort, fertility and prosperity the neighbourhood may be listed amongst those of Kenya that belong to Class A.

(b) The Long Trail from Lumbwa via Kericho to Distant Sotik.

Lumbwa Township, about 6,200 feet elevation, lies in a valley that often feels too sheltered for general comfort. A little more breeze would be all to the good and blow away the suspicion that some fever lurks along the pretty stream flowing through it. But it possesses two features that are unique elsewhere in Kenya. The first and most important of these is the premier co-operative butter factory of Kenya that has proved, in the face of all pessimists, that a local community can pull together and achieve success in combination—even under the equator.

As in every other enterprise of importance that has made its mark, one ruling spirit is largely responsible for this satisfactory result. Mr. H. E. Watts, one of the oldest settlers west of Nakuru, has been for many years the most prominent dynamic human force in this neighbourhood and is still the Chairman of the Lumbwa Butter Factory which he was chiefly instrumental in promoting and steering to its present prosperous position.

A Bristolian and originally a wagon builder, his practical training in this skilled trade, superimposed upon an indomitable will and tireless energy, peculiarly fitted him for pioneering life. Sturdily built physically, his direct-minded, plain-spoken, downright character has unfalteringly championed all policies that have promised economic advantage to Lumbwa. To-day he lives near his saw-mills on a beautifully sheltered farm 8 or 10 miles south of the township in the delightful climate that 7,500 feet elevation ensures.

The second striking feature of Lumbwa is its dak-bungalow and railway refreshment rooms; for here one meets, on intimate terms of good fellowship, a greater diversity of settlers, *au naturel*, than

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anywhere else the writer knows in the Colony. Why this should be it were idle to analyse. Nevertheless, of all the caravanserais possessed by Kenya, this institution of the Uganda Railway at Lumbwa is, from the point of view of intercourse with one's fellows, the most attractive.

It may however be admitted at once that the local community itself often furnishes a fair proportion of its patrons. Speaking from an experience extending over a number of years I am able to state that one can be certain at almost any time of an excellent night's entertainment here; and a jovial company that may consist of any type from clergy to professional hunters, journalists or cosmopolitan railroad contractors.

On the last occasion the writer stayed at this place he had the unusual privilege of seeing a man go "fey" and break into a series of prophecies, while apparently in a state of semi-consciousness, that involved the prospects of the civilised world and particularly the British Empire for the next twenty years.

The most picturesque sight the township affords is the milk delivery, mornings, at the factory; when much be-fringed and be-anklettted Lumbwa belles, donkeys with panniers containing cans of the precious fluid, and oxen dragging their heavy loads, come and go on the mountain roads.

Outside the township one plunges into a pot-pourri of richly grassed broken country that gives the illusion of being the foothills of some great range of mountains like the Rockies—only when one reaches the topmost eminences no sierra of white-tipped summits is visible. Nevertheless, this neighbourhood consists of the broken banks and edges of the higher highlands, Molo and Mau Summit way; and doubtless suffered a vast and prolonged agitation when the great Rift Valley was formed.

It is hard to find a flat piece of agricultural land anywhere in Lumbwa though the steep slopes are often very rich soil, and a patch of 100 or more acres fit for the plough is something of a rarity. Lumbwa would be an ideal ranching or dairying country if the pastoral races that surround it had not inoculated it with every disease known to Africa, and much difficulty is experienced in protecting stock from outbreaks of these.

The north-west corner of Lumbwa merges into the high country of Fort Ternan and appears identical in every respect with the land upon which Major Pringle is so successfully growing his coffee. There is a quality in the climate of this area that marks it out as singular; for it is clearly influenced by proximity to the Kavirondo plains and Lake Victoria, the breezes from which appear to soften along these hills the usually bracing air of 6,000 to 7,000 ft. elevation. Major O'Brien, whose farm adjoins Major Pringle on the eastern side is growing beautiful coffee at 6,800 ft. for which he was awarded first prize in his section at the Nakuru Show last year and obtains a high price on the London market; and Mr. C. Cardale Luck has 70 acres planted, which he hopes this year to bring up to 100. So satisfactory and rapid is the growth of this favourite crop in this special neighbourhood that the residents claim to get as good results at 7,000 ft. as are usually obtained in other coffee districts 1,000 ft. lower; and one blanket is found sufficient at this elevation for a night covering.

The normal richness of the grazing for stock after paddocking in this corner of Lumbwa is proved to carry over a beast to the acre. The famous couch grass of the Rift Valley is indigenous here and where it has been apparently killed out by coarser herbage returns at once if the land be

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ploughed and harrowed. Horses do extremely well also and vie in condition with the cattle and dairy cows in this delightful climate where European life thrives robustly.

The combination of cattle and coffee here seems ideal for the scrapings from the stock bomas are going to ensure a perpetual continuity of fertility when the virgin richness of the soil shews signs of exhaustion—which will not be for many years to come. Maize gives big yields also but the cultivable acreage is patchy for this crop.

It is a glorious experience when the track is in good order to travel on a fresh bright morning up the winding road that runs through the Lumbwa hills to Kericho. Looking back on it there remains in my memory an indelible impression of boldly rounded, richly grassed hills and vales; of slopes reaching up to the blue or sinking to the depths of Fort Ternan 2,000 feet below; all bathed in bracing, sun-illuminated ether. The huge bulk of Tindoret many miles to the north on such a morning is clearly enough visible to pick out each be-forested ravine; while almost at one's feet blooms a profusion of wild flowers in the golden and russet green of seeding grasses.

Amongst these are charming clusters of both Oxford and Cambridge blue Delphinia, the dainty loveliness of which extracts immediate homage; and the wayfarer gives this all the more readily inspired by the hope that their gentle spirits shall on no account suffer disappointment from lack of obvious appreciation and be perchance left behind him grieving wistfully over a vain beauty and sweetness that have been born to blush unseen.

Kericho district varies between 6,000 and 7,000 feet elevation, with a rainfall of about 70 inches per annum—one of the heaviest in Kenya. It seldom rains before mid-day however. Being over twenty miles from Lumbwa the first impressions of most people travelling there are coloured, only too often, by that unpleasant experience, a drenching to the skin. Nevertheless, it is a fertile, healthy and beautiful countryside with similar dark, deep, red, volcanic soil to that of Kyambu and Limuru. Very undulating with handsomely wooded ravines, at the bottom of which run permanent brooks of clear water, the district is specially adapted for small farms, devoted to intense cultivation. Water power is plentiful.

Two serious defects must be chronicled in this territory, where otherwise every prospect pleases. Severe hailstorms have an annual habit of sweeping across it, generally in July and August; and though this may not happen every year, when it does come crops are likely to be very seriously damaged. The other trouble is caused by the amazing growth of weeds and rubbish that spring up in the deep, rich well-watered soil.

Apart from these drawbacks coffee and citrus show clear indications of success. Maize can be grown so as to be beyond injury by hail during the most susceptible months. Flax, potatoes, vegetables, deciduous fruits, rye, barley and the like all flourish exceedingly. It is, however, probable that tea is the true money-maker at Kericho; for hail can injure this bush very little—I have heard some people say it improves the yield by increasing the growth of young leaf in the flushes subsequent to a flailing by the scourge—and climate, soil and rainfall are highly suitable to it. Kericho is, in addition, an intensely luxuriant pasture country if paddocks are kept in good order; and dairying should be one of its staple industries.

To Sotik.

With a long journey in front of us, my companion and myself

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started before daybreak and passed through the little Township in the dark. Dawn rose gloriously an hour later and confirmed the opinion formed by starlight that we were traversing an area of agricultural land unsurpassable for fertility and useful rainfall. Many square miles of this rich, almost treeless cocoa soil were given out to the ill-fated ex-soldier Boadon enterprise.

We were passing through a country row in the bright early morning where, with factories to take tea, coffee, flax, maize, milk or cream, a hundred acres of land properly worked will support in comfort a white family. White men can labour all day in this climate if necessary; and enough water, where running streams are not available, may be assuredly saved by dams in a rainfall of 70 in. per annum.

Thirty odd miles down this southern track we halted for breakfast, which we had carried with us, at Letain, half-way house to Sotik. The first time I passed through here some years ago, the Lumbwa Reserve, which marches for miles on each side of the highway, was thrown into ferment by the following incident.

A K. A. R. battalion, on a recruiting tour, was camped at Letain and the officer-in-charge hospitably entertained me to breakfast. Even as we were drinking our final cup of coffee, messengers, who gave the impression of having travelled rapidly from afar, arrived with the tidings that the Masai in numbers were raiding Lumbwa cattle far within the Reserve. Immediately tents were downed, wagons loaded, men—recruits and all—marshalled. Half-an-hour later, in company with the glad-eyed officer and his troops, I was riding toward the ex-German border—a ripple of living valour rolling on the foe—through an aggressive thunderstorm we might have easily avoided.

This downpour was so heavy that, though mounted, my boots became full of water; and it brought out the fever in my military friend's blood with the result that he was laid up with a very high temperature that night and subsequently remained seriously ill for a week. Some of the culprits were eventually captured, for on my return journey I overtook a small squad handcuffed and guarded by police, with the raided cattle accompanying it, on its way to be tried by the D.C. at Kericho.

It was nearing sunset when I crossed the Kipsonai and reached my destination in Sotik. Here, one emerges from the treeless, scrub-covered reserve to wooded lands, interpersed amongst glades and parklike country that has never been malhandled by the Lumbwa. The rainfall is excellent, nearly equal in fact to Kericho, as I can personally testify.

Though the so-called dry season was on at the time of my visit I had already been soaked to the skin once; and threatening clouds were gathering again in the corners of the vast panorama of rolling down, hill and forest. Anyone visiting this part of Kenya in the rains must be prepared for a serious ordeal, unless unusually well equipped to meet wet weather.

It struck me, as I penetrated further and further into this beautiful country, that a serious blunder had probably been made by the first pioneers in its name. Sokit—not Sotik—seems to be by far the more suitable title.

Like Kericho, this spacious area in normal times has a gloriously fine morning, but with more than even chances of rain soon after lunch. Visitors, who cannot very well arrive before this hour owing to the distance, often negotiate the few last weary miles in the web of

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Blooming sky and a rainthrashed countryside, where it seems to them always afternoon. Such an impression is, of course, a mistake, as a short stay in the district quickly proves.

But what a providential arrangement this climate is for the farmer and grazier; who have a fresh, working morning in which to attend to their affairs, followed by a copious sprinkling from Nature's watering-can nearly every day, beginning at the siesta hour.

Sotik, which lies roughly 6,000 feet above sea-level, though some of its hills are 7,000 feet, is said to have an average rainfall of about 90 inches, with never less than 2 ins. in the driest month. It is well provided with permanent streams (all of which look fit for trout), in which there is much water-power available and some of it already harnessed.

The biggest rivers are the Kipsonai and the Sisi, which curiously enough divide the agricultural from the grazing land. The latter is doubtless somewhat cold and water logged in very wet seasons and grows a grass of rather coarse tussocky type in its natural state; but it is all too undulating to become boggy. Indications point to murrum or gravel lying close to the surface. The soil is sufficiently sandy to make excellent bricks, and the local settlers exhibit considerable skill and enterprise in this direction.

The good red arable land is, when cleared of rubbish, of the richest description and will grow satisfactorily any crop proved elsewhere as suitable to the 6,000 feet level. Maize is the main crop here. Coffee does well; wheat has been successfully produced; and the evenly distributed rainfall is particularly suited for flax.

Wild honey is found on every table. This delicacy is collected by the Lambwa or Wanderobo in the great Chipalungu forest nearby; a vast stretch of timbered country where elephant and rhino roam in abundance, whence they occasionally make excursions into the neighbouring farms. Lion exist in this district and occasionally take toll of the herds. Some rare monkeys with remarkable colouring are found in the bush.

The pastoral areas are studded with small hillocks, clad picturesquely with trees of many kinds; giving the impression of tiny plantations. They are possibly ancient ant-hills of the largest size. These not only add to the beauty of the scenery but provide shade for beasts and firewood for man. This country is not entirely free from an occasional hailstorm, but, as far as I was able to ascertain the scourge is not very severe or damaging.

The Return Journey.

Like the wily old traveller I believe myself to be, I always make a point, where possible, of retracing my footsteps by a different route. In the case of Sotik this is not only wise, for it greatly extends one's knowledge of the district, but it is also perfectly easy to accomplish. The farms along the alternative route are well worthy of a few days' inspection. One with a fine stand of coffee, whose brand is well known on the London market and often fetches maximum prices was pointed out to me as entirely the work of its owner, who raised the seedlings and planted them out with his own hands.

West of far Sotik lie the Kisii hills, where very rich areas of vacant land exist to which no tribe can lay rightful claim. I could, however, only look over from one or two eminences into this idle territory, for my return road lay at the foot of the Sotik range, along a delightful country, undulating and varied in character, with two crossings of a broad, shallow, hard bottomed stream, as suitable for

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trout as any I have seen in the Colony. My path led me past an excellent citrus orchard planted on a flat of this little river, by a settler who hospitably put me up for the night.

Next morning my road joined up with the main track back to Kericho, and for the rest of that day I hastened on; watching the mile-posts go by in monotonous succession, until I realised something of the emotions that possessed the footslogger who Dickens portrays as having had indelibly burnt into his brain the fact that there are milestones on the road to Dover.

My sturdy, uncomplaining mule and myself slept deeply at Kericho that night and reached Lumbwa once more next morning. But I strongly advise those who can manage it to make this trip, if roads permit by motor car.

(c) Limuru.

If I have left Limuru to one of the last in my sectional descriptions of Kenya Highlands, the reason is attributable rather to its comfortable proximity to Nairobi; and a design to keep so delightful a country-side for one of my final tit-bits, than because it is either humdrum or mediocre.

Being twenty miles by motor-car, or an hour and a half steady climb on the winding Uganda railroad, from the Colony's capital, it seemed desirable to reserve it until such time as more distant areas had been examined and the subject could be taken up leisurely and wholeheartedly. So, one evening during a cessation in the rains, I found myself descending from my railway carriage just before sunset at the broad station that bears the name of this district and is situated in a charming valley of greenest pasture flanked by forest-clad hills. Within a few moments of arrival I was bowling along through the cool air of this 7,400-ft. level, away from the embryo township with its stores and tennis courts, up an arum lily drive, where purple irises mingled with the pure white of this beautiful flower and a young macracarpa hedge separated them from the fields or woods on either side. A very short space of time found me seated before a roaring fire in the sitting-room of Holmes' Residential Hotel; and the waxing chill of imminent night was forgotten amidst the blaze of light and warmth within.

Next morning I awoke in a pleasant bedroom whose French windows faced the dawn; and, stepping out into a slight mist, that had assembled immediately the first glory of the rising sun pallied, yet heralded a fine day, discovered myself surrounded by beds of violets, whose flowers, as large as wild pansies, infused an unforgetable fragrance into the tonic of the pure cool air. Near by were conveniently placed a picturesque confusion of orchard, byre, pig-styes, kitchen-garden, barns, and vivid green pasture paddocks. In the first of these I found a bewildering variety of European and tropical fruits, that was later to prove a commonplace in this district, for nearly every homestead in Limuru is similarly equipped. Lemons, oranges and tree tomatoes hung gaudily inviting. Peach, plum, and apple trees were bursting into leaf and flower.

Only the figs looked sullenly recalcitrant in their hibernating attire; enduring with an ill grace and under bare poles the inclemencies of the wet season, but with one or two be-dwarfed fruit at the end of some branches—advertising a disposition to let bye-gones be bye-gones when the weather should become more genial. It is usual to find in Limuru, sheltered underneath these taller growths, rhubarb and pine-apples, English spuds and sweet potatoes of the South Seas, Japanese wine-berries, cauliflowers and Cape gooseberries—all living and prosperously cheek by jowl, with a wide selection of other choice

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vegetables. Then the mist lifted and mysterious shapes of ancient forest trees or tall wattle groves loomed in sight; to be followed by brilliant sunshine and an insistent feeling—which drove me indoors for the next half-hour—that breakfast time had arrived.

The chief features of Limuru that must always impress the visitor are its abundant fertility, its diversified productivity, its healthiness, and its wonderful natural beauty. The district is self-contained to a remarkable degree; and in small compass offers an epitome of all that is best in Kenya's Highlands. There is not an important economic crop belonging to the colony—sisal and coconuts excepted—that does not flourish here somewhere. Its capacity to turn out vegetables alone is colossal; and the tragedy of Limuru is that it has no great market near it for this class of product.

Limuru could supply a population such as London or New York possesses with the choicest vegetables known to the civilised world; but its energies in this direction are perforce at present limited to the wants of the two or three thousand Europeans in Nairobi. Possibly an outlet might be found for this department of farming by adopting Canadian and American desiccating methods; but the risks and costs of introducing a new, highly commercialised system of preparing vegetables for export have so far not appealed to the local inhabitants as within the limits of practical business.

Every cereal used by man grows in some part or other of this district. Throughout its lower levels and indeed up to 7,000 ft. maize is produced. Wheat is grown regularly by some settlers in spite of dangers from rust; and indeed a rust-proof variety seems to have been discovered that suits this mild humid country. Rye and barley are certain crops anywhere. Oats have also been produced successfully in several different sections of Limuru. And all these grains are ground to flour by the several European-owned and worked mills already established; the motive power being supplied by the numerous permanent mountain rapids with which the district abounds, together with a series of beautiful waterfalls between upper and lower Limuru. Trout are now being introduced to some of these streams.

Amongst other products that have been proved to flourish here is flax, and an excellent factory in full working order is maintained close to the station. As I passed through the valley an acre or two of land was covered with retting flax straw. But the crop that has been most popular in the days when every settler was looking for some source of income which, by virtue of being an export product, could be relied upon, is wattle. Large stretches of land have been afforested and the country beautified by stately groves of this handsome Australian tree, from whose bark a valuable commercial tannin is obtained. To-day, with the advent of an up-to-date extracting factory, considerable revenue is expected to accrue to those settlers possessing mature wattle plantations—a return in the vicinity of £20 per acre nett being spoken of—and the future of this industry seems assured as a steady money-maker.

Stock of every description are to be found in the Limuru district, but especially it is pre-eminent for dairy cattle,—much of Nairobi's milk supply is drawn from this area—pigs and horses. Indeed there are numbers of the latter, born and bred in this neighbourhood, that have never seen a stable. Domesticated fowls of all kinds do remarkably well also; and some of the biggest poultry farms in the colony

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are situated here. Those important products, coffee and tea, will be dealt with in detail in my tour of this district, and it is enough for the moment to say that they promise great prosperity to Limuru—a promise that is already being materialised where bearing plantations exist.

The climate of Limuru is one of the healthiest in all Africa. Entirely free from malaria, its average daily shade temperatures are 71 deg. maximum and 45 deg. minimum. The highest maximum shade temperature in the year is about 76 deg. and the lowest 39 deg. An annual rainfall of 56 inches, averaged over eight years, has been recorded. The elevation rises from 5,300 ft. to 8,000 ft. These figures alone explain why this beautiful neighbourhood grows more and more popular as a place of residence, a health resort and holiday centre, with Europeans whose business takes them to East Africa. One result of this tendency is that several farms are adding to their revenues by taking paying guests and, both from a point of view of good food, spacious accommodation and general comfort, the standard of living achieved on them for visitors is high. The proximity of this pearl of highland areas to Nairobi and the ease with which it may be reached by motor-car or train add materially to its attractiveness as a week end resort for tired Nairobians seeking change or temporary home for visitors to Kenya and Uganda.

The People.

The present permanent population of Limuru is 145 folk all told; of which 61 are women, 51 men, and 33 children. The cutting up of the Caineville estate belonging to the late G. W. L. Caine, into small holdings—an operation that has taken place since the war—resulted in an additional twenty settlers finding accommodation and establishing themselves on the excellent sub-divisional farms on the property; and there is still plenty of land to be obtained from private settlers.

Amongst crops of secondary importance perhaps, but of very great potential value, that have been proved successful to the district, may be included citrus and deciduous fruits of all kinds, potatoes, lucerne, ramie, sugar-beet, and, in the lower elevations, sugar cane. Limuru is the home of that luxuriantly growing pasture, now famous throughout the oversea world as Kikuyu grass. Wherever the inedible scrub, that has taken the place of the primeval forest burnt out completely doubtless by successive generations of native agricultural tribes in by-gone centuries, is cleared away, this grass springs up naturally and if planted systematically and the scrub prevented from returning quickly creates lush meadows of emerald green; a colour this grass never loses in Limuru, thanks to the ample rainfall and copious night dews that fall at all times of the year.

The rugged contours of Limuru have necessitated much ingenuity in linking the various sections of the district and their farms together by road. The problem has been solved by creating a series of routes called A., B., C. and D., which, starting from the station, follow the main ridges of this countryside and enable the wayfarer to reach every corner of it. My first excursion, mounted on a quiet companionable old mare, proved to be on route D., and I attained to the main road by crossing Mr. Holmes' golf course where some of the guests of his comfortable and popular residential hotel were already at play in the crisp morning air, long before the sparkle of diamond-like dew upon clover, forget-me-nots and buttercups—they were all there—had been quenched by

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ardent sun. Mr. Holmes' estate consists of 400 acres of first-class land, a portion of which is carefully farmed, the balance being used for dairy cow pasture, pig-rising, bacon factory, etc.

Within a quarter of an hour I was at the homestead of Kabuku, an unusually large estate for this part of Kenya, belonging to Major C. E. V. Buxton, the area being 1,200 acres, of which one half is arable. Both the manager, Mr. C. J. Modder, and his wife, were at home, and I found the main pursuits to be stock and dairy farming. The property also carries 100 acres of wattle ready for stripping. Some interest was naturally expressed as to the prospects for their crops created by the new bark extract factory—which I was to visit later—along route B. Unfortunately the distance by road between the two places renders the advantages of this local market somewhat problematical to wattle growers on route D.

The chocolate red soil of this estate, its great productive potentialities for root crops—50 tons of mangolds to the acre without manuring have been recorded at Limuru—and its abundant growth of Kikuyu grass pasture are all very characteristic of this part of Kenya; and I left the prettily situated homestead and my kind host and hostess only to plunge into a tumbled sea of similar country. For miles my course wound eastwards up and down hill, through the chequered shade of tall plantations of wattle, along cuttings in steep banks, and across picturesque valleys; the only non-verdant colour in all of which was the churned-up track of rich, ruddy Limuru soil before and behind me.

Within a couple of miles, however another halt materialised at Mr. and Mrs. Nairn's boarding-house, recently erected and furnished by the owners on ten acres of partially cleared wattle land. High View (7,000 feet altitude) is so named because it is situated at the point where the Limuru country beyond may be seen falling gradually away to Kiambu, Nairobi and the lower forests and plains lying between the Ngong and Mua Hills. On fine days an immense view extends for many miles along the edge of this Limuru divide and the visitor may come in many places, at any moment, upon the glorious panorama, which stretches from Mount Kenya, a hundred miles away on the N.W. to Kilimanjaro, 125 miles to the south-east.

Mr. and Mrs. Nairn, who are only 17 miles from Nairobi on a main road, particularly cater at moderate terms for family people requiring a quiet holiday with their children. Yet care is taken by the erection of special play-rooms, separately built appartments and general spaciousness, to prevent boisterous young folk upsetting the equanimity of sedate unattached adults. Even the excellent furniture and comfortable springy mattresses here have been made by the proprietors' own skilful hands. Vegetables, milk, eggs and poultry are produced on the place; and the whole establishment has a new, spotless, attractive atmosphere that, together with the good food and attendance, is already making it favourably known.

Some distance further down D route I came upon Karura Falls (400 acres), the property of Mr. W. Hall, a veteran ex-Queenslander who first went to that state in 1881 and arrived, via South Africa, in the early days of Kenyan land settlement nearly 20 years ago. Here he has remained with his wife on his farm ever since; bringing up his family in the healthy climate of Limuru, and steadily developing his land from wild bush. I have had occasion many times to comment, in the

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course of my travels in Kenya, on the skill shown by individual settlers in doing things for themselves. But for sheer ingenuity and practicalness Mr. Hall is the father of the colony. His pit-sawn lumber buildings are all his own handiwork from the standing tree; he has himself installed a posho mill, a coffee pulper and a ram: a startlingly handsome cement tank, designed and constructed by the proprietor, which looks like a piece of Greek architecture dropped accidentally in the African veldt, takes the water of the last. I also inspected a home-made baler, wagon of 3-tons capacity, and grind-stone; together with a variety of harness, belts and other leather products, as well as reims, manufactured on the place.

17-Year Coffee.

The elevation here is 6,900ft. and the 50 acres of coffee, some of it 17 years old, looked, at the time of my visit, thanks to windbreaks and careful tree sheltering, remarkably well with a fairly heavy crop maturing and fresh flower buds forming. One hundred cattle are depastured on Karura Falls and the cows are broken in to Australian cow-bails.

But the pride of the estate is its fifteen horses, for Mr. Hall has been remarkably successful in this his favourite department. His stallion Pavillion, a dark bay with white face, is by Petric, a son of Fruscan who once won the Derby, and a great grandson of St. Simon. Bee, a mare bred on the place, won the Produce Stakes of 1922 in Nairobi and two other races; while Peeping Tom, another scion of this stable, won three races. Both of these are by Scottie. A racecourse has been built on the property; and the whole estate, with its beautifully grassed open paddocks and Australian atmosphere, looks like a bit of South Gippsland or Apollo Bay.

In agriculture, Mr. Hall, like many another Limuru settler, strove mightily to find a paying crop during the lean years, experimenting in every direction. Marrowfat and other seed peas, field grown, helped him for a time and he has always been a great potato culturist. At present he is specialising on British Queen, a clean, prolific, white potato, and supplies various public institutions by contract.

I left this property feeling I had been in contact with a real battler, and one of the true old school of British pioneers. Yet what one man can do another ought to be able to manage approximately; and life is considerably easier today compared to the time when Mr. and Mrs. Hall erected their first bush shanty, in the dank scrub and proceeded to drive away the game and big carnivora to clear a garden. Over forty-two years have elapsed since this sturdy colonist left the Old Country, and he has never once returned to it.

Further along D. Route, via a carpet of grass and romantically shaded lanes, I called on other homesteads; sunset found me knocking at the hospitable door of Mr. and Mrs. Luman just as the mists, which rise up nightly here and water the earth, even as they did in another and more famous terrestrial paradise, were approaching. A happy evening in the pleasant company and by the fireside of the inmates of the homestead, preceded a good night's rest, and the morrow saw me ready for the road again after a look around this property of first-class coffee land. Like so many others in Limuru Mr. Luman is fond of horses and possesses in his black stallion, Simon Early, one of the best-known sires in Kenya.

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Near neighbour to Mr. Caine is Mr. Gilpin, wheat grower and flower farmer. Many of the beautiful blooms which excite admiration in Nairobi's restaurants and hotels come from this property, which also maintains an extensive poultry run stocked with pure-bred strains of fowls, ducks and turkeys.

Another neighbour, Major Robertson, to be strictly correct Miss Robertson, this gentleman's daughter keeps a poultry farm with five or six hundred birds, comprising every variety proved to succeed in Kenya.

If I describe the farms visited somewhat in detail it is because the different methods and lines of income-making of individual settlers are thereby used as illustrations for proving practically the diverse potentialities of this splendid countryside. Yet Limuru in spite of its kaleidoscopic scenery and changing contours is remarkably uniform throughout in the matter of soil, rainfall, fertility and distribution of running water. The decisive factor as to what may or may not be grown is almost invariably elevation; and some sort of estimate can be made of the potentialities of many farms it is not feasible to mention here by comparing their altitude with those described.

A Veteran Settler.

Next day I retraced my steps to the vicinity of the station and started off again in a new direction. The estate immediately north of this centre belongs to Mr. W. H. Caine, President of the Limuru Farmers' Association, and the oldest settler in the district. It will be twenty years next May since this popular local leader took up his land and residence at Limuru. He is 64 to-day and still plays a good game of tennis on Saturday afternoons with the younger men and women on the district courts near the station. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend this customary weekly social gathering which helps materially to encourage a spirit of fellowship amongst settlers and to break the monotony of country life.

Mr. Caine has lived through all the vicissitudes of local development at his comfortable bachelor bungalow, a mile from the station in the hills (7,400ft. elevation). He owns 181 acres freehold and 528 leasehold, but is now-a-days inclined to dispose of the major portion of this area and confine his efforts to his chief hobby, fruit growing.

Kenya, and Limuru especially, has to thank this settler for introducing the tea-bush; and he turns out small but regular quantities of a very satisfactory and well-flavoured dried leaf which compares favourably with the commercial article from India. Owing to the night mists and other suitable conditions he obtains a picking flush every two, or three weeks throughout the year—a yield probably without parallel in better known tea countries—and there can be little doubt that a prosperous future lies before this crop in higher Limuru; especially if something in the form of a co-operative factory willing to take leaf on fair terms from comparatively small growers could be established.

The chief feature of Mr. Caine's tea, as disclosed by analysis made at the Imperial Institute, is its higher percentage of extractive matter, caffeine and tannin, in comparison with either Indian or China teas, and its lower proportion of ash.

In addition, there are 200 acres of wattle on this property and a small dairy herd of high-grade cattle. The orchards are full of a wide variety of citrus and deciduous fruits from all parts of the world. Vegetables have always been extensively grown here; and the

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coffee areas, though not large, have never failed to yield sufficient to render them a satisfactory experiment, especially where shade has been copiously planted.

Amongst the deciduous fruit trees and bushes I saw growing on this farm were apples, plums, almonds, walnuts, quinces, grapes and olives. It is a feature of this district that the cuttings or prunings of most fruits will strike, and grow rapidly into bearing trees, when planted.

Mr. Caine's gum trees are probably the biggest in the colony, though they are still only saplings, for many of them are quite 150 feet in height. Both he and his deceased brother have been great experimentalists. Amongst other things, they introduced ramie, which grows well; and a distinctive feature around the homestead are the grenadilla pergolas.

A mile to the north-east of Mr. Caine's house, and three miles from the station by road, is the farm and homestead of Mr. Hudson Cane (reached from Nairobi by route A), one of the best known holiday and rest resorts in Kenya. At a pinch sixty guests can be put up here; and last December 57 people spent their Xmas at this spot. The guest-houses, living-rooms, dining-hall and other buildings are scattered between ornamental flower-beds and rustic walks over two or three acres of land from any point of which the great panorama of Nairobi, with its attendant plains, Ngong Hills and the greater mountains, unfolds itself.

I spent a very comfortable day or two here; though my time was too occupied with trips in all directions to take advantage of the tennis-courts and golf-course or to actively assist at night either in the spacious and attractive dancing hall or its attendant and attached billiard room. The estate upon which this establishment has been created is 160 acres in extent. Vegetable growing and dairying are carried on and horses are kept for the use of guests. An excellent stone is quarried on this property from which all the buildings are now constructed.

From this pleasant place I passed on to many interesting properties and enterprises lying on or between A and B routes. Far down the winding road one Sunday morning I reached Mr. A. D. Impey's fine 660-acre property at 6,500ft. elevation, in the true coffee belt. Here were 100 acres of this crop in good going order, a stable of 13 horses including 5 brood mares, 100 acres of wattle and an orchard of citrus, together with a good selection of other fruits. Neighbouring this farm is that of Mr. J. Hutson, the show coffee farm of the Limuru district, containing 330 acres planted to this bush, much of which is in bearing.

Mr. Hutson has been here many years; but his constructive, well-planned scheme of development must nevertheless have been continuously held in view and worked for to have ensured the successful results he is able to show. He, perhaps more than anyone else at this elevation, has been pioneer of overhead shade-trees, which he now plants every 4 or 5 rows.

It is curious that the Grevillea Robusta appears to be the favourite tree throughout Limuru for this purpose and that bushes in its vicinity suffer no harm—as they do in some lower, drier districts—from its root system. Blue mountain coffee variety has been definitely proved the best and hardiest bush on this farm. An average return of half-a-ton clean coffee berry to the acre is being obtained here.

I spent a very pleasant few hours, wandering around this estate or resting under its homestead's shady verandah with a well kept garden before it, protected on

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side by mature indigenous trees, saved from the original primeval bush. The only complaint well tended coffee at this elevation seems to suffer from chronically is berry-berry; and the planter can put up with a deal of that.

Next day I walked through groves of tall wattle trees to the excellent girls' school founded by Miss Roseveare and Miss Lister and run on English preparatory school lines. This institution is situated in a beautiful setting of grassy flat, forest-clothed hills and spacious view. The elevation is 7,200 ft.

A lady medico, Dr. Lillington, has established herself on a farm in this neighbourhood and is general practitioner to the Limuru district.

A number of jolly, fair-haired, bare-footed, healthy Anglo-Saxon children from differents parts of Kenya, were at work when I peeped into the solidly built, open-air school hall; and permission was graciously granted me by the highly qualified mistresses to watch a lesson in eurythmics, just about to begin on my arrival. This mysterious subject proved to be a very pretty form of musical physical drill that all the pupils quite evidently delighted in, even down to two tiny boys whose attention was clearly not too easily focussed.

Beating time and gracefully gesturing with hands and feet to pleasant melody were the methods used to instil the rudiments of music, dancing and rythm of sound and movement into the children. Mental concentration is noticeably fostered by this form of exercise on every impulse of the brain and action of the body.

It struck me as I watched that along these lines may be the true cure for an East African memory, which is of course really due to an over-strained brain kept up to concert pitch too long without corresponding physical reactions. It was in my mind to enquire whether this possible and certainly more interesting substitute for Pelmanism could not be extended to adults; but a small boy so fascinated me with his highly creditable handiwork, as shown by his exercise-books, that the matter was forgotten and I went away charmed by the inmates, the atmosphere and the promise of this very up-to-date educational establishment.

No department of Kenyan life is more important to the future of the home-making European community and the Colony in general as a white man's country, or more in need of wise fostering than an educational system which will enable parents to keep and rear their children near them. Institutions such as this are working in this direction.

Money in Vegetables.

On another day, mounted on an easy-going hack, I passed through the station and followed the undulating rising B route to the north-east edge of Limuru, 7 or 8 miles away. Just below the first half mile of hillside track and within sight of the railway lies snugly at the junction of flat and lifting wattle-clad bank, the residence of Mr. L. G. K. Way, one of the biggest wholesale vegetable growers in Kenya, on his 400-acre property. With him lives his step-son, Mr. E. S. W. Herring, the secretary of the Limuru Farmers' Association. Mr. Way is one of the original pioneers of Limuru, and contracts on a large scale for supplying all the biggest local consumers of vegetables—which he is able to grow to perfection at Limuru—from the Uganda Railway to Mombasa shipping.

On the higher ground behind him, but close to the main B road, is the Nderi estate of Mr. G. Simpson, whose homestead, at the apex of a gradual rise—a charming situation—is approached through yellow

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flowering hedges and spacious green lawns. Here a considerable business in jam-making has been worked up by Mrs. Simpson; plots of suitable fruits such as wineberries, cape-gooseberries, etc., growing perfectly and to a surprising size on the farm.

First prizes at local agricultural shows have been obtained for Ndori estate jams; which, promise in time to displace the imported article entirely, for they are fresher, very appetising and cheaper.

Jam-Making.

On my arrival here jam-making was in full operation, but Mr. G. Simpson, found time to walk round his property, shewing me considerable areas of well-cultivated potatoes in full flower and promising the heavy yield of quite ten tons to the acre. An ornamental lake has been dammed up between ravines on this property, which is the prettiest creation of its kind I have seen in Kenya. A comfortable punt and a bathing house invited a longer delay here than I was able to afford.

Mr. Simpson, who also contracts to supply potatoes on a wholesale scale and possesses some fine varieties, has built a very large and well-roofed store for holding this product and is simultaneously planting fruit extensively.

Away at the back of this farm, and from many another spot in Limuru, one catches sight of Mr. Morson's house built on the most commanding eminence in the district—a site that in the middle ages would undoubtedly have been seized and utilised as a business proposition by some castle-building, robber-baron.

But I did not have time to wander so far off the beaten track and, passing its winding road regretfully, I pursued my aim which was to reach the dairy farm of Messrs. Pirie and Bradshaw, two stout-hearted Etonians, seven miles from the station. B route lay to my right now and I found myself on C route, a beautiful country full of the most varied scenery and gradations. Passing several farmhouses, I eventually arrived at this property where I was most hospitably housed and assisted for the next two days while I wandered around this end of Limuru.

In some respects this farm is the most interesting in Limuru, for here one finds dairying being carried on in the most up-to-date British or American style. The magnificent herd of Frieslands, pure and high grade, are all milked by the owners with white assistance; heavy feeding is undertaken; a model cow-shed houses these aristocrats during the milking hours and every intelligent attention possible is given to the business of turning out a perfect lactic fluid for sale to Nairobi consumers.

From this fine farm, with its roomy, well-built and furnished residence and beautiful panorama, I was able to call at the Wattle Factory at the end of B route. This enterprise is proceeding steadily and hopes are entertained that it will be able to handle 100 tons of bark per week in its extract plant. An immense iron chimney 60 ft. long and weighing 5 or 6 tons, was being levered and pulleyed into place at the time my lady companion and myself approached unexpectedly; and those concerned were clearly relieved to discover by enquiry that we had not noticed anything peculiar about their language as we drew near. Our presence evidently hampered operations at this critical moment, so we left—asking them for ten minutes' grace to get out of hearing, which was granted.

Another institution I was able to visit this same day was Lady McMillan's new venture, started only 7 months ago, named Brackenhill Stud Farm, at 6,900 ft. elevation (300 acres). Here 24 mares and horses are already housed; clearing and paddock are going on

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[illegible] under very able and energetic management. A number of valuable imported thorough-breds are expected to arrive by the next few mailboats.

Space forbids me to go on, as I very well could, in further eulogistic description of this lovely countryside. There remain, for example, the highest coldest levels upon which at 8,000 ft. still stand the grand primeval forests that had no attraction in ante-whiteman days to the warmth-loving African native. Here flourish mighty cedars, a market for whose beautiful, incense-laden wood is being found in pencil making; also the Muweri, a strong, hard, durable, reddish timber used by builders and wheelwrights.

In addition are found a useful yellow wood (Musangera); an olive (Mucharagi) sometimes called iron wood, beloved by wagon-builders and furniture makers; and camphor wood, one of the finest timbers in Kenya and the local though superior substitute for teak in all kinds of furniture manufactures. The biggest tree of all is the Muna, a fine-grained, durable white wood, that rises to over 200 ft. in some cases with a basal circumference of 20 ft.

In this forest area the beautiful colobus monkey lives in the higher barrows of foliage; while on the tangled ground-floor may still be found the rare Bongo antelope and the giant forest hog perhaps the ugliest of all terrestrial mammals.

In this great forest operate several saw-mills; and over to the west lies Uplands, also a part of the Limuru district, in which is situated the well-known Bacon Factory at Uplands, the next station, Kisumu-wards, on the railway.

Finally, and by no means of least importance, around all the great district of Limuru live tens of thousands of Kikuyus, forming a practically inexhaustible labour supply for the skilled and enterprising European settler.

(d) A True Whiteman's Industry.

One enterprise, amongst the many interesting and inspiriting farming businesses of Kenya deserves special, detailed description because it is not only without parallel in the lovely district of Limuru but also there is nothing like it in the whole of the Colony. I refer to the dairying concern of Messrs. Piric and Bradshaw; for here we have all the latest and most scientific methods of milk production belonging to England and America established in their entirety amongst us and contributing to the milk supply of Nairobi.

I reached this property, which is delightfully situated on the north-east edge of Limuru's uplands overlooking a vast area of Athi Plain, distant ranges and all the great mountains familiar as household words in the vocabulary of Nairobians, after over a six mile ride along C route from the station; a journey rendered strikingly pleasant by reason of the diversity of Tyroleanlike scenery along the winding road.

The farm itself lies at an elevation of 7,500 ft. and is 230 acres in extent. In this district of luxuriant Kikuyu grass, so reminiscent in its greenness and exuberance of spring-time amongst Irish or West of England pastures, an area of this size, properly developed, is capable of great things. Eighteen months ago this farm was almost entirely hidden by scrub and forest; against the rank growth of which the natural grass of the countryside, though existent, had small chance of extension.

To-day a series of well-fenced paddocks exist in which all bush has been eliminated and the planted suckers and roots of Kikuyu grass have thriven so

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amazingly in this short space of time that the fields possess all the appearance of century-old pastures. The owners are still hard at work adding to this series; and it is clear that they will not be content until they have developed the whole property in the same manner. Yet this is but one department of the activities of these partners during the last year and a half, i.e., since they entered into possession of the property.

A very solid, well-designed and commodious residence has been erected and excellently furnished, which assures that personal comfort essential to folk who are working constantly day and night in all weathers in the open air of a cool, wet climate. During the last eight months a well stocked and pretty flower garden has also emerged from the chaos inseparable to the creation of a new homestead; and both this and an extensive system of pergolas that promises to add a singular charm to the surroundings, are the special work of Mrs. Pirie.

All these things are however merely the setting and framework to the main objects of this interesting enterprise. The glory of Karirana farm are its beautiful Friesland cattle, its cowshed, milk cooling room and other outhouses, built according to the very latest ideas of the world's most advanced dairymen and, above all other things the fact that these instruments of pure milk supply are solely operated by the owners themselves; for no native is allowed to either handle or milk the aristocrats of which this herd is composed.

That very considerable capital has been sunk in this undertaking goes without saying. The six pure-bred cows are the best that the partners have been able to procure in Kenya regardless of expense; and the bull first in use was a son of Mr. Ben Garland's Sheltered Vale that took first prize against all-comers at last Nakuru Agricultural Show; but the herd is now headed by "Harlen's Marvel" a South African imported bull and considered the best of the eight bulls recently sent up by the Natal Friesland Breeders' Association.

Some very valuable pure-bred youngsters are already accumulating and it does not require any unusual vision to perceive that both for quality of milk and pedigree stock this newly founded estate bids fair to become pre-eminent in the Colony within a very few years.

In addition to the pure-blood Frieslands mentioned above I found a pretty mob of 25 to 30 high-grades of the same famous breed being milked night and morning. The average of the milkers right through is to-day one and a half to two gallons per cow; but the owners are not going to let their income producing yield rest there and hope, within five years, to raise this average, by careful selection and discarding, to at least three gallons per beast.

Practical Experience.

That these dairymen know what they are aiming at and what they may reasonably expect to accomplish may be judged from the past practical experience of the elder of these partners. Mr. H. V. Pirie has specialised on Frieslands for the last seventeen years. He has farmed in Kent, Gloucestershire and South Africa; and he is an original vice-president of the British Friesian Society.

A very significant feature about this dairyfarm is the fact that, after painstakingly touring

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Kenya in order to get a grip of conditions and the intrinsic suitability of the different districts for the purpose at the back of their minds, these partners have, firstly, chosen Limuru as their centre of operations and secondly have deliberately broken away from the old "coloured country" tradition, that it lowers the prestige of the whiteman to do a job of skilled manual work himself, and are milking their cows by European labour only.

The only previous instance of such a bouleversation of local ideas known to the writer was that of Mr. Grist of Gilgil a few years ago; and it paid him so well that he has long since retired to a life of leisure. Here is in fact the kernel of the whole matter. Messrs. Piric and Bradshaw believe it pays to do their own milking or at least to employ skilled Europeans. It is not merely that their customers are better pleased with a supply originating from so unexceptional a source but it is better for the cows.

Experienced dairy experts have long wondered, when they have seen the usual methods of handling pure-bred milch strains and high grades in Kenya, how it will ever be possible for the Colony to hold its own either on the world's markets, when the inevitable export trade in dairy products is opened up, or in the perpetuation of a high-class of generous milk producing animal.

Kenya has probably as high an average carrying and stock feeding capacity to the acre—especially if land be cleared, sown down and paddocked—as any country in the world. There are extensive areas in which purebred and high-grade cattle do excellently with reasonable attention. Indeed every indication goes to prove that the Colony is essentially and primarily a dairying country. Yet the damning fact remains that up till now if a herd can average anywhere near half a gallon per animal it is considered quite a normal and satisfactory output.

It is doubtful whether one man in a hundred in Kenya, interested in the dairying industry, subscribes to and reads the leading technical papers on this subject. Those who do may perhaps remember the report in the *Farmer and Stockbreeder* (7-5-23, page 1136), amongst other papers, of the experiments conducted by Dr. Crowther, principal of the Harper Adams Agricultural College, Newport and made known by him at a lecture before the Shropshire Chamber of Agriculture.

Expert v. Novice.

Speaking on the effects of skilful as compared with inefficient milking, he gave extraordinary results from carefully observed cows of which I have selected two cases:—

1. A skilled milker produced 11.3lbs. of milk containing 4.2 per cent fat.

A novice produced 9.4 lbs. of milk containing 2.5 per cent. fat.

2. Skilled milker produced 14.7lbs. of milk containing 4.1 per cent. fat.

Novice produced 11.9lbs. of milk containing 2.7 per cent. fat.

Inexpertness, he proves, as typified by slow, clumsy milking, is not only the cause of deterioration in good milk cattle but produces an immediate and surprising loss in both quality and quantity; and one experiment, directed to ascertain the difference between quick and slow milking, resulted in a variation of 10 per cent in milk and 30 per cent. in butter fat.

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The milk ranching system, under which cows are run with their calves part of the day and bulk output of milk is secured by numbers rather than quality, has always occurred during an early stage in the development of new countries and undoubtedly serves a useful purpose. All the British Dominions have gone through this phase. But, as Dr. Crowther points out, it is only wasting good money to breed or buy really good cows and then handle them inefficiently. And does any one seriously believe that this young Colony possesses any native milkers, even amongst the pastoral tribes, with that combination of gentle sympathy, quiet understanding, conscientiousness and speed which are amongst the attributes of a good European milker? No. Messrs. Pirie and Bradshaw are on the right track and they represent and are pioneering the beginning of a new era for highlands dairying and stock-breeding in Kenya.

Mangers and Food.

While staying at this pleasant but businesslike farm, I visited on several occasions the cemented airy cowshed during milking hours. All the Europeans on the estate, even including Mrs. Pirie, who is an excellent milker, take a stool during this period of the day or night routine work and assist in hastening the filling of the milk cans for despatch to Nairobi. Every manger is filled with a variety of nutritious food such as lucerne hay, green maize, bran and maize meal; not merely to keep the cattle contented during milking time, but because the principle is never lost sight of that the Friesland is a milk factory and must be well fed and kept in good condition if a maximum output is wanted.

Cleanliness is a particularly noticeable feature throughout the whole operation here; the cowshed being thoroughly washed out after each milking and the udder of each cow being carefully laved and dried before a commencement is made to take away her contribution for the churn. Again, a wash-hand-stand enables the milkers themselves to constantly clean their hands during the course of their work.

All the day's and night's milkings are strained and cooled immediately on the most hygienic lines and then put aside in a cold place until despatched to catch the 3 a.m. train from Limuru in time to reach an evergrowing circle of customers by breakfast time in Nairobi. Kavirondo drivers take each day's output to the station during the cold night in an ox cart. No stale milk is therefore sent away.

The usual times for milking are 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. and it is a pleasant experience to walk through the lush grass when the mists are lifting to herald the commencement of a fine day and enter the warm, comfortable shed, odorous with the sweet breath of these friendly, contented kine. An almost cathedral-like silence reigns, broken only by the musical plash of quick-flowing milk into the pails or the metallic note of a moving can. With very few exceptions the cattle are out at pasture both day and night. Though Karirana is situated in a heavy, never-failing rainfall district, a ram has been installed which pumps 1,800 gallons every 24 hours to a height of 380 feet above the river and a distance of 3,000 feet to the topmost point of the estate. The effect of this valuable convenience is that ample water is constantly available not only for the house but also for cooling the milk and washing cowshed, utensils etc., while the stock have close access to good drinking water at all times.

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It is not the intention of these enterprising partners to entirely eschew other lines for which their farm is suited. Horse breeding also appeals to them; and their climate is one of the best in Africa for this interesting class of farming work. Already four good loose boxes have been built and several fine brood mares acquired. And without doubt the name of this firm will become a well known one in the near future in the Colony's equine racing circles.

(e) Ngong and its Sub-Districts.

"East, West, home is best," is an old and honoured saying; and it is a remarkable feature of Kenya Colony, paying a sincere, if unconscious tribute to its high standard of attractiveness, that most settlers are firmly convinced that the district they have chosen as their permanent abiding place is superior to all others.

However, I am not going to claim any superlative qualities for Ngong and its sister sub-districts of Dagoretti and Mbagathi, because I live in the neighbourhood. Though one Association combines and represents their political ideas and aspirations, there exist wide variations in soil, scenery, and even rainfall. But in certain important desirable matters the whole of this countryside is akin. The elevation averages about 6,000 feet and amongst its general good qualities stand out prominently the salubrity of its climate and a convenient proximity to Kenya's chief town.

Within the borders of this area, which is contiguous to the great Masai and game reserves, one may obtain delightful samples of totally different yet entirely characteristic African highland country. To reach Ngong one travels ten miles south of Nairobi town, along a good main road that crosses the "Hill" suburb, runs past the Club, and cuts through Kilimani into a lovely greenwood tract that would have cheered the heart of Robin Hood and his merry men.

Here, if the visitor knows his way, he can walk for hours by good bush-tracks through the glades and heavy timber of the Longata and Ngong forests in alternating, verdant-tinted sunshine or refreshing shade; with no other company than the bonny green, strong-winged swallow-tails that swish past him intent on their life business; or a fleeting glimpse of some great cat, wild pig, or buck as hurriedly crosses the path and leaps into the security of the underbush on the further side.

Beyond this belt of forest, which the main road traverses, one comes out to open plain on the left. Nearby, via a country track to the right, are the first homesteads to be encountered; though if one knows where to look the government forest station—a pretty spot—may be found previously; unbrageously concealed not far from the highway.

The farm of Messrs. Gaitskell and Kirkman, recent comers to Ngong, who have taken over a property of 320 acres with 200 under coffee that has suffered from considerable neglect in the past, lies on either side of this westerly turning. The road winds through the flat bed of a shallow valley. On either side are undulations from which the original forest has been cleared and prim, straight rows of coffee substituted. Half way up and on top of the ridge to the north, as one advances, lie respectively the two homes of these partners, embowered in trees and bright flower beds. Twenty acres of the coffee are interplanted with lemons, a crop concerning which high hopes and corresponding pessimism bewilder the Kenyan grower by their quick succession.

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In the time of the previous owner this estate was regarded as "dry" and much money has been spent in experimental well-sinking. The simple expedient of throwing a concrete wall across a stream that runs for nine months of each year on the northern boundary has solved this problem and provided a lake of such ample dimensions that both swimming and boating may be indulged in. Another notable, recent improvement is the factory where a good deal of thought and ingenuity have materialised into one of the neatest and handiest outfits for the preparation of parchment coffee that one can find in Kenya.

Next door is Mr. McNaughton's fine property of 610 acres, of which 170 are planted to coffee, much of it being in bearing. All but about 100 acres of this farm is suitable for coffee; and within the next few years a big income will be realised here. The owner is one of the early pioneers of Kenya, having landed in 1905, who has doggedly struggled on to his present prosperity through the lean, early years of the colony. A nice herd of milch-cows bred on the place and a steady trade in firewood, jembie handles, and yokes have all helped to finance this estate.

Ngong, as age goes in this young country, is one of the oldest areas into which white settlement has penetrated and made good. Here some of the first experiments in coffee, by men possessing no knowledge of the crop, were made; and many other districts to-day that have left Ngong far behind in bulk of output owe something to the spade-work originally carried out by settlers along the Mbagathi river.

The headwaters of this last-named stream are to be found a bare half-mile further on from McNaughton's and many of the Ngong farms possess a frontage on it. A portion of the springs that feed it rise on Mr. Boström's farm, managed by Mr. Pents, scion of an old Cape Colony family, who possesses that hereditary pioneering skill naturally belonging to the Dutch South African. On this property of 230 acres, 120 are under coffee; and heavy yields have been harvested from the mature sections. Indeed, wherever the coffee-bush has been—from planting—carefully cultivated and wisely treated at Ngong this profitable crop holds its own in comparison with other, perhaps better known districts. Pulping was proceeding at the time of my visit; and one is vividly impressed by the natural beauty of the surroundings here which have been enhanced by tree-planting and the picturesque orderliness that the home-making settler evolves out of primeval sylvan chaos.

Once on the Mbagathi river some idea of the district's geography is obtainable; but until one realises this a more confusing countryside to find one's way about in does not exist in Kenya. This is possibly due to the undulating sylvan nature of the district, all the hills and ridges of which are composed of rich cocoa coloured volcanic soil and clothed in woodland or coffee well interspersed with shade-trees.

Beyond Mr. Boström's, in a westerly direction, is firstly Mr. C. M. Harrison's snug little farm, where general farming is giving place to coffee, and beyond that the pretty homestead and bijou property of Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Laws, whence for years past a proportion of Nairobi's lucerne, wheat, and firewood requirements has been supplied.

One finds accentuated, as one penetrates into the heart of the evergreen Ngong district, what a small-farming, highly cultivated, fertile area it is. Properties of more than 300 acres are the exception and the tendency is in the direction of splitting these up to about 100 acres or under as an ideal holding. Full of beautiful home-making sites and all the

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improvements of rural comfort, Ngong is already a popular family area and a number of healthy young Kenyans are growing up in these pleasant surroundings.

One notices with interest, in a district of somewhat confined views, owing to its natural configuration, the tendency of all residences to be placed on some vantage point where they can turn their faces towards the great range of mountains that gives the neighbourhood its name. Like a magnet this beautiful verdure-clad sierra draws all local landscape interest to it. Distant Kenya and Kilimanjaro are forgotten in the vast imminent bulk of this 50-mile long hill across the Mbagathi.

Next door to Mr. Pentz is the delightful little 60-acre coffee and poultry farm of Miss Motherwell, one of Kenya's best-known lady settlers; and further on again one comes to the home of the earliest pioneer in the district and one of the first in the colony, Mr. McQueen. On his small farm this wise and capable veteran has brought up his family; and, besides coffee, his main crop, he is proving the remarkable suitability of the Ngong district for fruit-growing. His peaches, apples, Japanese plums, grapes, and many other fruits form one of the finest recommendations that this district can give of fertility and temperateness. For example, one young apple tree, only nine months planted, gave a net weight of 11ozs. of fruit this year; British Columbian and Tasmanian papers please copy.

Amongst this group of delightful semi-sylvan farmsteads is that of Mr. L. Gorringe, M.C.; a striking personality and one of the most tirelessly industrious settlers in Kenya. On his 80-acre farm named Rosaires, are to be found many things of exceptional interest some of which, indeed, so far as the writer knows, are unique in the colony. Mr. Gorringe, one of the few remaining survivors of the historic Jameson raid, who procured his certificate as an aviator when well over forty years of age as a holiday diversion while on a post-war trip to England, is—amongst other things—the leading viticulturist of Kenya. His grapes, indeed, are without rival on the Nairobi market; and his stock of varieties, from which he now does a considerable business in rooted cuttings, is comprehensive.

This farm is probably the only one where peacocks and peahens may be found in Kenya. But the pride of the place is the pack of small rough-haired terriers—a strain well-known now throughout the colony, with which the owner regularly conducts a hunt one day a week on the neighbouring Ngong hills. Several local settlers frequently attend these pleasant outings; but whether others come or not Mr. Gorringe, possessed with a hereditary love of this old English sport, never fails to sally forth when conditions permit; and with his wonderful pack will tackle anything from elephant to duyker.

Like another Herne the hunter on many an occasion he even roams the wild, rugged slopes of these great hills—where the fiercest and largest game existing on earth may be met at any time—long after dark; and it is a by no means uncommon occurrence for him to return home as late as 8 or 9 p.m.

Some fine, permanent improvements have been built on this property, mostly of stone, besides the solid, comfortable residence; including stables with an ingenious smoke stack arrangement to drive away mosquitoes, cattle dip and kennels.

Apart from dairying and a steady milk business from the excellent herd of cattle, coffee and fruit growing form the main sources of revenue on this property. Consignments of strawberries are sent in regularly to the

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Nairobi market from an irrigable flat on the river; and both sheep and goats are maintained on the farm.

Next door, going south, is Mr. Leakey's farm and across the stream Lady McMillan possesses a fine block of undeveloped forest land which, rumour says, will shortly be converted into a flourishing nursery, under expert management, for disseminating throughout Kenya all the choicest varieties of fruits and ornamental plants that money and experience can collect.

Alongside, also on the southwest bank of the stream, is Sir Frederick Sprott's property originally a part of Major Steele's largish estate. This, in turn, stretches across both sides of the stream and adjoins, on the north, a fine, detached block of the Karen Coffee Company's holdings, that, combined, comprise the biggest concern by far in the district and of which more anon.

Major Steele's farm possesses a larger share than usual of irrigable river-flat—every estate on the Mbagathi has a piece—and I have seen enough vegetables growing on this fifty acres of rich land to supply the needs of all Nairobi. But market-gardening is a common place in well-watered districts like Ngong; and every vegetable known to the European or American world flourishes with a minimum of labour in our Kenyan highlands.

Beyond Major Steele's splendid coffee and fruit farm is Dr. Hemsted's property; with its charming stone homestead picturesquely placed amongst indigenous timber, green lawns, and vividly coloured flowers, and facing Ngong Hills. This settler concentrates on coffee and has erected a simple, efficient pulping factory, near the little river, which is noteworthy for an ingenious automatic feeding device designed by the owner.

A considerable area of this estate remains under its beautiful woodland; and as this section is alongside the main road it has been decided to retain it in its natural state and sell it off in small blocks as a residential area for retired officials and others who desire perfect rural, sylvan surroundings within easy reach of Nairobi.

Dr. Hemsted is deservedly popular in a district where there is no medical assistance nearer than town; but he himself has nothing but praise for the healthiness of the entire countryside. Fever, he states, is unknown here and had he not retired from his profession after many successful years of practice before the war in Bournemouth, and taken to coffee-planting, Ngong would be, from a business point of view, one of the last places to choose for settling down in.

On the further bank of the stream, beyond Dr. Hemsted, is a prettily laid-out property that formerly belonged to Mr. van der Weyer and is now owned by Mr. Ambrose Smith. Lemons were originally grown here in wholesale quantities; but to-day coffee is taking the place of this fruit in the cultivation paddocks. A considerable area of this farm still remains under forest. The land is, however, of high quality, equal indeed to anything in the district, and will make a very valuable coffee estate when cleared and planted.

Neighbouring south of Dr. Hemsted's and occupying a loop in the Mbagathi where it turns towards the east is the main estate of the Karen Coffee Company, a Swedish enterprise that has gone in for this favourite crop on a wholesale scale. At the present time the estate has 620 acres under coffee, and the manager, Mr. Dickens, must be one of the busiest and ablest estate managers in Kenya to keep this area in the excellent order one finds it. The intention is to bring

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acreage up to 1,000, which will make it the biggest concern of its kind in Kenya. In all there are between four and five thousand acres in the Ngong district owned by this company. The estate now produces its own maize with which to feed labour and finds as well grazing and food growing facilities for hundreds of native squatters.

A large portion of this fine plantation consists of grass vleis or flats which, though excellent pasture, are not considered to be arable at present owing to the stiff nature of the black soil. A fair amount of woodland is also conserved for timber and firewood, commodities that should grow steadily more valuable as time passes and Nairobi's requirements increase. Baroness Blixen, the chief personality in this joint stock company, lives in the comfortable, charmingly furnished, and well-appointed stone mansion that serves for homestead, surrounded by about 200 acres of this natural bushland.

All scrub and trees that might obscure a wide and varied view have been cleared to the front and side in the direction of the Ngong hills. Vividly green Kikuyu grass has sprung up under the trees so cleared and the effect is spacious and parklike, adding a beauty of its own to the already solid, refined, old-world atmosphere of the place that brings back long-forgotten memories of snug chateaux buried amongst the pine-forests of Northern Europe.

One other large block of land, belonging to Mr. C. C. Luck of Lumbwa and consisting of at least one thousand acres of mixed glades and woodland, borders the Karen Coffee Company to the south, with a couple of miles of frontage on the small river so frequently referred to. This property was owned originally by Mr. Oulton; but he moved away several years ago to his larger estate at Thika and has since parted with this beautiful holding, which would sub-divide well or make a fine general farm or residential estate for anyone.

East of this area and that of the Karen Coffee Company, Ngong district merges into the Longala and Mbagathi country; all of which—that has been alienated from the Crown—was given out after the war as small ex-soldier A farms. One or two of these blocks possess as much as fifty acres or over of coffee land. The bulk of this area however is either open grass plain or stony, shallow and gravelly woodland. In its original state it was waterless except for two small blocks on the Mbagathi and one small spring. But the industry of the more genuine and persevering of the allottees have created dams or sunk wells and to some extent overcome this disadvantage.

Beyond this area again is a belt of Forest Reserve, forming an elongated bank of more or less scattered timber, that varies from a mile to a mile and half in width and drops gradually 600 feet to the Athi Plains proper. The sunrise and the Mua Hills are in the distant background here, while Nairobi itself lies in view away to the left. The municipal slaughter house, near the stream so often alluded to above (across which is Masai and game reserve to the old German frontier) is the only near by isolated building in sight.

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CHAPTER IX.

SIDE LIGHTS AND MAIN ISSUES IN KENYAN PIONEERING LIFE.

(a) Comments on the Native and a Description of Life Among the Kikuyu.

MARRIAGE NEGOTIATIONS.

Little has been recorded in the foregoing account of Kenya Highlands about the native, for the main object throughout has been to show the whiteman's doings. Yet it would be foolish to ignore the African or to imagine that he is an ingredient of little importance in local life.

The blackman is the main manual worker in Kenya and is likely to remain so. In this particular he forms one of the chief attractions to the home-maker and resident of the colony. For although much can be done by white people and indeed, both from health and mentality points of view, continuous physical activity is most desirable and necessary, the fact remains that so long as native employees are obtainable the harder and more monotonous tasks of life will be lifted from the shoulders of white men and women to a degree entirely unknown in purely European dominions of the Empire.

Space is not available for a long description of the native here. Their numbers are probably in the region of three millions spread over 160,000,000 acres and the main tribes are divided into two great divisions, i.e., pastoral and agricultural. The former take with difficulty to manual labour, though some of them, notably the Lumbwa, are doing so gradually. Of the latter the Kavirondo is the heaviest, biggest type of human being and is usually preferred for the harder tasks of wood-cutting, navvying, etc. The most numerous tribe, belonging to the regions closest settled by white colonists, is the Kikuyu or their near relatives; and for the purpose of securing a brief, intimate picture of their character and surroundings to add to my collection of Kenya experiences, I betook myself early one Sunday morning well into their great Reserve north-west of Nairobi, with a pocketful of nuts and biscuits as provender, for the next few hours, to wrest a page a two of real primitive life from this locality—even if I had temporarily to "go native" to acquire it.

The day had opened gloriously with all the finest qualities of English June weather. A cool, steady breeze was blowing and a sky of perfect blue, flecked with a few fleecy snow white clouds, stirred in my blood the old love of the open road and increased my predisposition to seek adventure amongst the mysteries that the rolling areas of lovely green country which surrounded me must of necessity contain. Through the sound conveying channels of the limpid air, which seemed to possess,

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ringing timbre of its own, came the soft chanting of native women, or the murmur of their conversation, as they worked happily away on their plots of land (the average area cultivated by a native to provide food for a family is about a quarter of an acre) and, fascinated by the natural beauty of it all, I sank for a few minutes into a bed of pea-green couch grass waiting instinctively for the inspiration that should govern my further movements.

A quarter of an hour passed blissfully and then, just as I was about to shake the growing lethargy from me and pass on sobered by the conviction that my guiding spirit was not willing to act on this occasion, the silence broke. Near by, but still out of sight, some person with a musical tenor voice but an atrocious accent sang with great unction and expressiveness the following words:—

"The li-hons do raw-er and suffa
rungor,
"The li-hons do raw-er and suffa
rungor,
"But 'e that luveth the Law
aw-awd
"Shall lack no manner of thing
that is good,
"No manner of thing that is
goooood."

Twisting in amazement towards the sound which drew nearer round the corner of a bend in the track I presently beheld a sailor in white costume and turned up, regulation, straw hat, walking slowly towards me. Drawing a deep breath, which visibly swelled a muscular chest, he had just begun again the first line of this extraordinarily quaint but admirable anthem when he caught sight of me. In a moment a surge of scarlet welled up under the tan of his healthy looking, clean-shaven face. The roar of the "li-hons" died down and I distinctly heard a sotto voce "'bli-me," before the instinct of politeness caused him to salute with a "beg-parding sir."

I hastened to re-assure him; at the same time throwing in a compliment both as to his musical gifts and the extreme appropriateness of his song. That some members of the visiting squadron at Mombasa were in Nairobi I was aware; so I followed on with an expression of hope that he was having a good time, while I noted with satisfaction the blush gradually subside into a good natured smile.

"I've knowed that 'ymn ever since I was a boy, sir, and I really couldn't 'elp it, its such a fine day I was brought up religious sir and have sung it many a time, in the choir of our village Chapel at 'ome. I never thought the chanst would come to give it lip in a real lion country."

Here he glanced round apprehensively and we both simultaneously became aware of two natives armed with spears journeying rapidly in our direction from town along the main thoroughfare. "Ah that's what I wants to see" went on my companion "how they dress and live and what they play at, but I can't speak the lingo. I was brought up religious and I knows they're all poor ignorant, benighted 'eathens. They don't look too bad though do they?" He added as he watched the newcomers.

"So you're out for local colour too" I laughed. "Well, let's see what fun we can get from these and I'll be interpreter."

Moving along the road so that the swiftly approaching "boys" must catch us up, we quickened our pace when they came abreast and I entered into conversation with them. A cheerful, respectful pair of Kikuyus, they presently informed me with many a furtive glance at the sailor's strange costume, that the first of them was principal in marriage negotiations at his home that day, while the other occupied the position of friend, supporter and best man.

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"Going to be spliced" I informed my sea-faring companion tersely and in my best nautical dialect. Whereat he showed every symptom of deep interest, even to the extent of whispering hoarsely in my ear, being apparently under the impression the ceremony was similar to a public hanging, "Can't we see 'em pushed off?"

As we proceeded I held the pair in conversation and badinage until, perched on a lovely hill-side near the road, a considerable group of native huts came in view which the two Africans stated was their destination.

I soon found the leading personality amongst my native roadside acquaintances was a man of some importance and wealth. The pasture land around was dotted with his cattle, sheep and goats. No less than three of his wives met him on the way to their farm work and greeted him quite affectionately; though they did not kiss but shook hands, for he was returning after a week's work in Nairobi. Then, as we came to the parting of the ways, he turned, and with a gesture that implied the inclusion of the sailor man, asked me to deign to accept the frugal hospitality of his home, to shed the light of my countenance upon his abode and to contribute the brilliance of my understanding towards the council-meeting or kiama about to take place. Reading the hand of fate and a distinct answer to unexpressed prayer in the invitation, after a slight, dignified hesitation, I accepted on behalf of myself and companion.

A Kiama.

When we reached the kraal my host at once ordered refreshment to be brought for the M'Zungus; and we were furnished immediately with a long stick of sugar cane each, to chew, and sweet potatoes, nicely roasted in a gourd.

Not being squeamish by nature I partook of this food with a great show of gratitude and appreciation, an example followed by my fellow victim; offering in return some of my nuts which, being new to them, were investigated at first suspiciously and then enjoyed. One old woman who proved to be the mother of the girl whose fate was being decided, made faces for a little as if I had poisoned her, but the others having reassured her she eventually even smacked her lips.

We were then ushered into a fair-sized, round, straw-thatched hut, already tenanted by a few goat-kids, of whom no one took notice however, and with my 3 feet of thick sugar-cane under my arm, I took my seat in the place of honour at the head of the conference with Bill, as I had decided to call my companion, alongside. On our left sat a number of grizzled old men, with the father of the bride in the middle: to the right squatted the suitor supported by half a dozen young bloods, and at the back of the latter prowled the old lady already referred to, whose position seemed to be that of a sort of counsel for the defence, or mediator in the cause of true love. She was the only woman allowed to be present, though a couple of others sat and suckled their babies just outside the entrance right opposite me and tripped up those that went in and out. Once settled in our places the inspiration seized me to open the proceedings in a novel way. I leant towards my companion and whispered in his ear "give 'em the Li-hon anthem Bill, and beef it out." To my gratification the sailor rose nobly to the occasion. With great solemnity and much suitable, impressive action he gave tongue in his strong sonorous voice to his favourite chorus, beating down all other sound and compelling the amazed and reverent attention of the assembled company and a crowd of listeners without.

When the company had recovered from the effects of this agreeable interlude, huge gourds full of native beer were carried in

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the old woman; an old tin mug and a broken cup being found for the two whites, the others drinking out of horns such as the old Saxons loved. I found I was expected not only to do my share of drinking, but, as the guest of honour, everybody present required to drink with me out of my mug as a sign of appreciation. However, I stipulated that they all drank on one side of it, leaving the other for myself, should I be forced to put my lips to it.

Then the pow-wow began in earnest. Members of this tribe are not necessarily objectionable in appearance—many have very pleasing features—but the father of the bride was very old and ugly, and had a peculiar prehensile pendant upper lip that stuck further out and wiggled fatuously about the mess beer he drank. He began with an impassioned speech in which he maintained that the girl in question was not only the pearl of the family but also the pick of the bunch. She was likely to make by far the best wife my host had at present (groans of dissent from the wives and babes at the door) and yet, and yet, this young man, rich in cattle, actually haggled over paying one more cow for so great a treasure. Then, turning round to the other old men, he clinched his argument by adding—"Has she not in her veins the blood of Jeroge, who killed lions single-handed, and of Kimani, the Masai slayer: is not her mother one who gave birth to three girl children to each boy born of her, all of whom have brought large marriage dots to their grateful father; and has not that mother taught her to make beer that even the M'zunzu, and especially the great singer, deign to drink, and to till the shamba from early morn to dewy eve? (Loud grunts here from the old lady at the back).

At this juncture my mug was requisitioned, and presently returned to me full of new-drawn milk. A very thoughtful act that I appreciated, although I had my doubts as to how it would mix with the native beer; which tasted very like sweet cider or mead, and is made from sugar cane or honey. This was all the more considerate of them as they themselves never drink milk after they have been weaned as children. But they are slow in accomplishing this first step towards maturity, for one of the women was breast feeding a boy of two and a half years. Later on I felt it incumbent upon me to give her some sage advice on the subject—but this was after the council meeting was over, and during a sort of tour of inspection that I made subsequently.

The old man having finished and subsided into a horn of cider, from which he refreshed himself with copious libations, the young suitor commenced his harangue. He pointed out that any maiden might be proud to enter such a household as his, which was noted for its good order, the excellence of its beer, and its ample supply of food. She would find his other wives anxious to welcome her as one of themselves, for they were all kindly spirited and desired her help in the farm work. Further, no matter how good her blood and ancestry might be, the father could not but feel that he was allying his family to an equal, for (and here he swelled his chest out and struck it violently) was he not of the tribe of Bouti-wa-Kamau, who, after first fighting against the white man, had helped them for five years to lay the great iron road on which run daily the mighty wagons that breathe fire? Was he not a first cousin of the Chief Kinanjui? Had not Mungu (God) already blessed him and proved that he was a worthy sire, and free from the disease that eats up, root and branch, those who are accursed? Let them go out and look at the strong children that were playing round the kraals! Above all (and this was evidently his trump card) had not

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the maiden herself chosen him before all the men and women of ten villages at the great night 'ngoma held at last full moon, by putting her arms round him while he stood in the men's ring chanting the love song. Here the old lady was quite overcome and groaned continuously until an "horn of mead" was pushed under her nose.

The best man did very little, for the suitor seemed to be quite holding his own; but he secretly pleased me and distinctly annoyed Bill by drinking up our beer whenever he thought we weren't looking. Both he and the other young men, however, kept up a series of side arguments with the elderly supporters of the other camp.

The Extra Cow.

It was clear to me by this time that the chief bone of contention was not so much the marriage itself, but that item of the marriage portion, the extra cow; and my suitor stuck fiercely at this point in his peroration, for he denounced the demand as unreasonable, and announced his disinclination to part with what he evidently regarded as the most valuable animal in his herd.

Here I thought it time to assert the authority of my race and my position as chairman by throwing in a suggestion that we might go out and interview the young woman in question (I wanted to see her) and inspect the cow. This seemed to me a good move, for I was getting cramped squatting on my little stool and wished to stretch my legs and get a breath of cool fresh air. But this was evidently contrary to etiquette, and aroused some consternation; in fact, no one intended to leave before the beer was finished. The old mother became at this juncture solicitous about me and suggested that I should make myself more comfortable by discarding my clothes and donning a blanket.

From this time on the meeting degenerated into a sort of general argument; whereupon, after a decent interval, I suggested a song or dance. This was taken up enthusiastically and their chief performer was produced. He at once commenced by singing about about the virtues of the old couple; and finally of the suitor and his future bride. This touched the assembly, so I decided to create a diversion by a dramatic appeal to the old man to obstruct the consummation of true love no more but to consent without further delay to the match and hand the maiden over forthwith. This proved to be the best venture I could have thought of: the young men gave a sort of cheer; the old woman groaned again and I believe wept, while the wives and children at the door made a curious singing noise in their throats or ululation that signified their approbation. The old man and his supporters seemed quite disconcerted at this turn of events and took to beer drinking and muttering amongst themselves.

This denouement appearing to give me a chance to get outside for a little I signalled to Bill and rose. But the suitor and his best man were not willing to let me depart. They assured me that they had never met a Mzungu like me before (which sounded flattering), that they loved me; and that they had decided that wherever I went they would go. If I would only tell them where my farm was they desired nothing better than to move their houses, their flocks and herds, their wives and children and possessions and to come there and work for me. For they assured me they were great men with cattle and sheep, that they understood the growing of crops and would serve me faithfully for the rest of my life or theirs.

It is worthwhile mentioning here as a curious phase of African life that the native is by no means enamoured with his stagnant reserves from which large numbers, if permitted, would escape, gladly leaving behind the persecutions and

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and injustices of their head men, in order to seek the protection of some honest kindly white settler, as chief, able to give them employment. The wholehearted influence both of the administration and missionary effort is exerted to counteract this perfectly natural tendency to seek the economic guidance of normal unprivileged whitemen who are dependent on their own efforts to make a living. According to the latest returns from Uganda it is proved that the annual output of wealth production by cotton-growing natives under the supervision of civilian settlers amounts to from six to ten times that of natives working for themselves in their Reserves. There can be no rapid wealth creation or permanent practical civilisation in Africa without an immense increase in technically skilled, organising, unofficial self-supporting whites wedded to private enterprise; and all the endeavours of uneconomic bureaucrats and sentimental busy-bodies to conceal this obvious truth and defeat this natural law by extravagantly expensive and in effective educational alternatives are merely postponing and evading indefinitely the main objects that they pretend to cover under their latest catch-word "Native Trusteeship."

With great difficulty I made them understand that I was not prepared to make any arrangement of the sort at the moment, but would remember their offer in the future should occasion arise. Then, on my promising not to go away altogether we were reluctantly allowed out for a walk; myself burdened with my long stick of sugar-cane under my arm (for whenever I tried to leave it behind someone always brought it back to me). We strolled away about a mile—it was hot afternoon by this time—and lay down beneath some banana trees to cool. Two men, who had been told off to see we didn't lose ourselves kept us under observation at a respectful distance.

It was at this stage that I noticed a change come over Bill, who hitherto had entered joyously into the spirit of our adventure. He had grown silent and pensive during the last hour and every indication pointed to some sort of brain convulsion taking place under his sphinx-like exterior.

At last he broke out. "Look yere Mister" he began "this aint the sort of thing I was looking for when I came out this morning to see the pore benighted 'eathen in 'is 'aunts. Me and my mates 'ave spent the best part of our lives 'ard and lonely on the sea protectin' these and their like, until their lot is better'n anything I could 'ave guessed at. Why that chin-waggin' revue this mornin' beats a mother's meetin' in my village at 'ome for interest and 'armlessness. It's more fun than a Saturday night in the Blue Dragon at Gold'anger when I gets back from sea and meets my pals again. That blighter what's gettin' spliced has already several useful wives and a round dozen or so of kids. He's got more land and more cattle than the farmer my ole man's worked for all 'is life and there's thousands of acres round 'ere "—he waved his arm—"untouched and unused. Now I 'aint too sure I've ever rightly understood what it means to be a pore benighted 'eathen; but what I wants to know is if this is the glorious British Hempire is there any 'ope of my gettin' five acres—just five acres for myself. I was brought up as a boy to farmin'; I've got a gal too like that bloke with his three or four and 'is incubatin' system. This land beats Essex all to bits. It beats the slums and it beats the work 'cuse. It's cooler than the stoke 'ole in the Indian ocean; and its a sight pleasanter than Portsmuth 'ard when you're shoved ashore on a winter's day. I've served and worked, and been kept unmarried to protect these 'ere, good luck to them; but

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ain't there a bit of land and a home for me if I asks for room to build one when I gets my discharge? Aint ordinary white men and white kids wanted any more, except to work an' fight an' live an' die in barracks an fo'castles to guard the increase of these 'ere coloured folk?"

With a pained wave of my arm I bid my inconvenient questioner cease his flow of eloquence. Springing to my feet with an expression I tried to make dignified but which felt hypocritically sanctimonious, —for I suddenly remembered the million unemployed, languishing and degenerating at Home—I murmured "Reserve" and turned again resolutely towards the scene of the morning's comedy; besides I did not wish to break my promise. Our guards were on us promptly as soon as they saw the movement: and greatly delighted that we had not mysteriously vanished, they led us back. The old couple and suitor were still arguing in a corner, but the other old men were now taking their leave and all insisted on solemnly shaking hands with us—first spitting into their palms; not to clean them, but as a special mark of respect.

More food was thrust upon us, including another stick of sugar-cane, and we were ushered in this time to the old lady's particular hut. Here I distributed cigarettes, which greatly delighted them, and they offered snuff of a peculiarly pungent quality. They lit a fire for our especial benefit; but as the hut had no chimney, and the draught blew our way, the process of being turned into bacon became too realistic and I had to ask them to put it out.

We were now informed that negotiations had come to a satisfactory conclusion (though I couldn't make out whether the cow had been included or not in the dot) and the old couple signalised their satisfaction by a pathetically shaky dance, making a capital picture of a dusky Darby and Joan. During their performance they made repeated dashes at me and insisted on shaking hands, which—rightly or wrongly—gave the impression that some of the kudos for the amicable settlement was attributed to me.

When this was over, more corroberee of a general nature followed with more protestations from my host and the best man that they loved me and would work for me for ever. I listened sympathetically for this seemed an interesting feature of their gratitude. Thereupon, another young fellow joined in saying he was a splendid cook, could make bread and cakes, and yearned to enter the service of my bibi and myself.

But evening was approaching, and we had a few miles to walk before we reached civilisation once more. When I announced we were really going, there arose quite a hubbub. They all wanted us to stop the night and started sorting out old rugs, sacks and blankets to make a bed. Thereupon I bolted out of the hut and proved my determination by starting off followed by Bill. Just then the maid who had been the cause of all the day's excitement came back from the fields, and I was introduced. She had a pleasing face, was young, of course, well-shaped, with round swelling bosom and healthy skin that gleamed in the sunlight, sturdy, and beaming with happiness. She was dressed in new skins, prepared in a similar manner to chamois leather but well oiled—the invariable costume of Kikuyu women and very durable—and had on an abundance of ornaments. She was in fact quite the belle.

I pressed into her hand a small coin to bring her good with the luck most princely air I could assume, and we departed. But we hadn't done with our hospitable friends. They all trooped out to the road to speed us on our way; the old woman carrying an immense gourd of beer on her back, with which to drink a sort of stirrup-cup by the roadside. As a final

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Bill called on Bill to give the "li--hons" once more. Bill obliged and his voice went ringing musically down the valley with its brave assurance of faith in the goodness of Providence. But Bill's heart was no longer in the spirit of his anthem; and he only broke the silence once on our return journey to Nairobi. That was to tell me darkly that he "wouldn't sing that bloomin' hanthem again, at least not the last *'alf*" until a new Government took over; for he added clinchingly, "it wasn't true", anymore, he explained, than the composite text that used to stand out round the pulpit in his village bethel and beckoned him for years to the great world with an indefinable promise of fortune, happiness and adventure. It ran as follows :—"The meek shall inherit the earth; for the earth is the Lord and the fulness thereof."

From which I gathered that it is not sufficient now-a-days to merely sterilise the ox that tramps the corn. He must be deprived of his other senses as well if our pseudo-philanthropists and Muthuriaks are to carry smoothing to their logical conclusion their artificial and unnatural dog-in-the-manger principles of sectional liberalship.

(b) Chief Centre for Exploiting and Exporting Kenya's Pig Produce.

UPLANDS.

During a previous visit to Uplands I found the management seriously considering raising the height of their receiving pens for porkers bred in Kenya, from 3ft., their normal elevation, to 6ft. The reason for this was that the class of pigs being sent to their siding from all parts of the Colony frequently included specimens that seemed to have been reared with an eye to their racing, steeple-chasing and general athletic development rather than their utility for ham and bacon.

It is perhaps one of the best testimonies to the efficiency and success of the present general manager of this concern that the Company's influence, since his arrival, has contrived to impress upon their suppliers a mental picture of the right type of fat hog necessary to produce a first-class article of commerce and the need for increasing the height of the receiving pens has in consequence entirely disappeared.

No description of Kenya would be complete without an account of the enterprise whose chief reason for existence is the creation of an export trade in the products of the colony's pigs. So, early one morning, I descended as the train stopped outside the group of prettily designed buildings that constitute the factory; set on a bank forming a framework of luxuriant grass and graceful trees and facing a wide flat of rich, re-claimed swamp pasture bounded in turn by further bamboo and timber-clad hills. With the traditional good fortune of the free-lance wanderer I found myself just in time for a welcome breakfast of palatable sausages and other delicacies made on the premises; and in the resulting cheerful frame of mind was able to pursue investigations at my leisure.

This centre of activity lies between Limuru and Escarpment stations on a property 2,000 acres in extent and at an elevation of 7,680 ft. The position was specially chosen because of the suitability of its cool, Home-like climate for manufacturing to perfection those delicacies especially favoured by the British for their morning repast. Nevertheless, although thoroughly equipped, mechanically, for the task in view and strategically well placed in a country capable of turning out immense quantities of fat porkers at prices that should compete with any other part of the world, a great deal of difficulty has been experienced in getting a permanent footing in the world's markets.

This is attributed to several causes, chief among them being the irregularity and unsuitability of shipping accommodation, currency

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troubles, combined with serious fluctuations in prices since the war, and the effort that has been required to educate settlers up to the necessary standard of preparing their pigs for a first-class market. Great and cumulative progress has, notwithstanding, been made in export since 1919 and a chart kept in the office graphically shows the advance already achieved in the struggle for entry to the London trade.

In 1922 the export of ham and bacon exceeded that of the previous year eightfold; yet it comes as a disappointment to learn that, up to date, this business is not on a satisfactory financial footing. A steady loss has still to be incurred by the Company amounting to as much as £900 on some consignments and never less than £50 to £100. Only a wealthy concern could stand the long drawn-out drain on its resources that this entails, but the Uplands directors having put their hands to the plough are tenaciously exhausting every effort before admitting failure in this laudable enterprise of establishing an export trade.

The main factor in these losses has been shipping uncertainties. For though it is now possible to get the goods down to Mombasa in good condition, thanks to the recently instituted refrigerator car of the Uganda Railway—which is not yet patronised or perhaps known about adequate by settler exporters—the long delays that frequently take place in that port before accommodation can be secured have the effect of tremendously depreciating the value of these perishable foodstuffs.

Cases are on record where consignments in perfect order, sent down to meet boats upon which space had been definitely booked, have been refused and forced to wait in hot Mombasa for months. Where the goods have been able to get away promptly, excellent market prices have been secured at home. Where ruinous delays have occurred the gross returns have sunk to less than the cost of freight! A private cold storage at the port is now materially assisting to minimise these losses; but the cost of even a convenience such as this might be avoided if the shipping companies would give more sympathetic attention to the urgent needs of this budding industry.

Nothing should be too much trouble to those concerned in encouraging what ought to be a staple trade for Kenya; for the Company always has its hands full in keeping up a standard product and competing in quality with its many overseas' rivals. The price obtainable to-day in London is 70s/- per cwt. less than it was twelve months ago, and the management, in spite of its policy in attacking and reducing ruthlessly the expenses on every single item of manufacture, is still at present unable to pay a dividend.

Factory and Labour.

The factory possesses probably the most complete outfit of machinery and buildings, designed for efficiency in receiving, slaughtering and curing fat pigs, to be found in Africa. The present capacity is 100 pigs per week; and at the time of my visit a nice lot of the true, phlegmatic, obese type that makes the finest hams and bacon was waiting for transformation on the morrow.

Well trained Kikuyu have learnt to do the work of slaughtering with remarkable expertness. Their personal and traditional hatred of this species of animal makes for the advantage of the Company, once they have overcome their dislike to handling it. They give the impression of administering the *coup de grace* with an alacrity and unction that spring from a natural animus against hogs of all kinds. Subsequently they cut them up—or down—with a cheerfulness that has almost a touch of religious zeal about it. I am inclined to form the opinion that if they could be persuaded that the main object of the factory

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render this, in their eyes, objectionable creature extinct they might be willing to work at particularly low wages, just for the love of the thing.

That they do the work required of them satisfactorily under the skilled white control resident on the property is proved by a recent London report which states that the products from this source are equal to best Canadian and offers the congratulations of the examiners to the Uplands' management. During Colonel Tucker's last trip home, some time before the death of General Sir Owen Thomas, M.P., the originator of this business, a luncheon of Uplands products was given at the House of Parliament, when the members invited, the catering manager and the chef, united in praising the high quality, favour and cure.

Once the pigs elected for killing have been rapidly, silently and humanely dispatched and scalded, they are cleaned and passed into the chill room to cool. The limit of the factory's capacity appears to be controlled by this accommodation. For it is essential to get the animal heat out of the carcases as quickly as possible, and to preserve an uniformly low temperature during the first stage of curing. The Wiltshire method of curing is followed at Uplands, and from the chief downwards all are experienced in this particular line and indeed most of them are natives of the premier ham and bacon county; forming a small colony of West-countrymen at this distant centre.

There is indeed much of home-land beauty and even climate in the situation of Uplands that cannot but appeal to men hailing from the west of England; though it be set in, and bounded by, forest-clad ranges with vast views over its southern edge of the immense Kedong Valley and far-away plains and mountains that are without a parallel in the Old Country. But the marshlands are there, only needing the systematic attention of an expert farming community capable of creating the ditches of Sedgemoor, Highbridge and Cheddar to render their meadows as lush and sweet as are those of the most famous reclaimed dairying and fattening areas of Somerset.

Rain and mist, with their concomitant mud, equal to anything that the west country can show, are customary for weeks at a stretch in the rainy season and possess the same quality of freshness and tonic as in Europe; being carried thither out of the north-east by strong, healthy winds, identical, as far as one can judge, except in their direction, with the persistent, warm, wet, western winds of England. It is indeed rare to experience a west wind in Kenya; yet it does occasionally occur and in the neighbouring district of Limuru I have sniffed the ozone in it, carried five thousand miles across darkest Africa by the upper currents of the air from the same Atlantic which plays so important a part in the climate of Britain.

But the marsh-lands are not extensive, and even the wettest day at Uplands almost invariably breaks off by 12 a.m. into a sunny afternoon possessing the generous warmth of a fine June day at home. At present the most valuable land of the Uplands area lies on the banks and hills that surround the swamps. Deep chocolate, loose and eminently fertile, where it has been cleared of its natural forest, it yields fine crops of wheat, barley, oats, lucerne and potatoes.

Other Activities.

With an acreage of 2,000, it stands to reason that other pursuits are followed on this property besides the pig curing business. It is a farm, and an extensive farm, capable of all sorts of development; and as I strolled round in the champagne-like tang of the morning air I came across many interesting lines of work in going order. On one portion of the estate an excellent quarrying

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Tony has been found, out of which three more permanent buildings are now constructed. But many useful barns have been made from bamboo, obtained in the forest near by; and in a store of this material were lying a few tons of special seed potatoes for sale to growers of this useful tuber.

Alongside, in other outhouses, grains such as barley and maize were assembled. An excellent, permanent, Government-size dip that only cost £170 to build was located in the same neighbourhood, close to a grassy glade the pasture of which consisted largely of white clover. As to flowers, the gardens around Uplands' bungalows are prolific and eminently homely. Violets, wallflowers, sweet peas, sweet williams and roses equal to those of the best cherished gardens in the south of England may be seen almost any time of the year, edging an emerald sward of Kikuyu grass. Neat dense macracarpa hedges close in complete privacy some of these plots; and on the day of my visit the sough of the wind in adjoining gum plantations and the distinctness of the summits of the Aberdares 20 or 30 miles away presaged the imminence of autumn; or the rainy season, as it is called in Highland Kenya.

It will have been gathered from the above account of Uplands that this district is by no means a bad one for dairying. Indeed, when my wanderings brought me to the dairy herd with its stone dairy and byre, it was pleasant to see the fine stamp of pure-bred and grade shorthorns that have been got together on this spot; some of which are giving three gallons per day on the natural pasture.

The altitude of this estate renders its climate peculiarly suitable for handling the products of the cow; and no better butter is made in the Colony than that turned out here. In witness of this it is enough to state that Uplands' butter took first prize at the recent Nakuru Agricultural Show from 22 competitors. A butter factory is clearly indicated by this success and the generally fine rate conditions for the manufacture of this and kindred dairy products. The matter is in fact at the present time engaging the attention of the management and a creamery may be established which, by means of an access road, already surveyed, to the Kinangop will enable a number of milk-producers to be tapped in the surrounding districts.

Within easy distance of the cattle-yards stand the piggeries, grouped conveniently under one roof with a commodious store and food compartment dividing the two wings where substantial styes to which every modern labour saving, feeding, cleaning and comfort-supplying device has been incorporated, and is in use. No better instance of the thought put into the construction of this building could be given than the farrowing rail along each wall which is a great preventive of infant mortality; for it makes it difficult for the sows to overlay their young and has paid for itself time and again by safeguarding the individual members of big litters.

Breeds of Pigs.

The Tamworth cross is much favoured at Uplands, but Berkshires and Long Blacks form of course the main basis of the type of rapidly grown and carefully fattened stock raised for the factory near by. Big litters are usual here, among which a minimum loss of life occurs. The Berkshire boar kept on the premises is probably the best in Kenya, having been specially purchased for the Company at the annual sale of the Berkshire Society in England. Pigs and sows in all conditions of development and preparation for marketing or breeding were to be seen at the time of my inspection, some of them being in show order, and an atmosphere of cleanliness and unceasing attention pervaded the whole place.

That much care and even pride is taken in this department of the farm's activities is not to be wondered at. All the chief men in the management are experts in this

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Colonel Tucker himself having served in the world-renowned firm of Harris, Wiltshire, for 25 years as Secretary and Manager before taking up his present important position.

Scrupulous pains are taken to see that every supplier of pigs to the factory has just treatment, true weight returns and a remuneration that is strictly in accordance with the quality of animal forwarded. Each pig is identifiable from the moment it enters the receiving pens till it departs in the form of ham and bacon to export or the consumer. A contract basis of buying which binds the farmer to deliver a certain number each month over a period of three years has been introduced very successfully to all concerned and a permanent committee to watch over the interests of the supplier has been formed.

The need for constant attention to the quality and condition of each consignment is apparent from an inspection of the carcasses and pieces in the cold-rooms. An experienced man can tell at a glance or at least with a touch on what the animal has been fed and whether too much of one or another type of ration—especially if of an oily nature has been given. To encourage right proportions of food the recommendation has been given to pig breeders to raise their fats on the following menu:—4 parts of maize and 2 of barley, well soaked; or 8 parts of maize, 4 of barley, and 10 of potatoes; with, in addition, half a gallon of skim milk per day. The necessary green food should be chiefly, if not entirely, lucerne.

All sorts of delicacies, such as brawns, polonies and other small goods are made for local consumption in the factory. A curious feature of the Nairobi trade is that it is found to be very difficult to get rid of cured shoulders; for our Kenyan housewife appears to demand hams and nothing else. As my guide pointed sorrowfully to a big pile of those fore-legs in a corner of the cold-room I caught telepathically the unexpressed wish in his mind that Nature had designed the pig with four, six or even more hindlegs and a length of side that ran into fathoms. What a pity it is that one cannot cross this useful animal with a wholesome, edible kind of centipede and thereby breed out its limitations—even though it is stated in some quarters that everything of it is used, bar the squeak.

The management are now installing, in addition to their already very complete set of machinery, a tinning or canning plant that will enable them to preserve attractively every form of tinned meat as well as good soups, pastes and other delectable materials or recipes. Indeed under its present vigorous control Uplands might develop into any form of manufacturing centre or even industrial town; and the Company is quite prepared to discuss the matter of providing sites for, and even financial participation in, any new industry that, in the opinion of its advisers, there exists an opening for in Kenya.

To end up my interesting round of this beautiful place, I had the satisfaction of being given a general motor-car tour of the property; subsequently extending the trip into a delightful sylvan lane equal to any one could find in the most charming scenery of the New Forest, that led on to the adjacent district of Limuru. After this fitting culmination to a busy and fruitful day, I was fortunate enough to catch a passing train that landed me in Nairobi by nightfall.

(c) Kenya's Section of the Cape to Cairo Railroad. Unique in the Wonderful Annals of Contruction.

Any attempt to give a comprehensive verbal picture of contemporary life in the highlands of Kenya, which I have been busy in the description which I have been engaged upon writing during the last few months, would be economy in-

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complete without something more than a passing reference or two to the great railway building enterprise now being carried through to its present destination in the Turbo Valley, beyond Eldoret. During my various expeditions up and down the Colony chance has brought me into the vicinity of both ends to this line, now far advanced in the making. And I have also travelled for long stretches along, or parallel with, its permanent route.

Even without seeking for the unusual in this undertaking, and as a matter of fact railways do not usually appeal to me, certain features of the tremendous engineering task, that the world-famed firm of Messrs. Griffiths & Co. are under contract to materialise here, have impressed themselves subconsciously on my mind and render it, to my thinking, in many respects unique in the really wonderful annals of railway construction.

It is not merely that this colossal piece of work breaks a record by crossing the Equator, which feat, in order perhaps to be sure there shall be no mistake, it achieves three times in a few miles—though that in itself renders it remarkable. One only has to take up a map of the world to discover that no other railroad approaches within five degrees of the imaginary line that divides the two hemispheres at the centre of its so-called torrid zone. But it is also one of the most elevated railways in the world, and certainly the highest in the British Empire.

"Canstaff."

Starting from its Nakuru junction at an altitude nearly half a mile higher in the air than Mount Snowdon, the loftiest point in England and Wales, it reaches at Mile 70, 9,040 ft., or exactly 140 yards short of two miles above sea-level, and well over a mile above the premier Welsh mountain named above. This occurs at Canstaff (contracted from "Canadian staff"), so named after a small group of flax-growing Canadian ex-soldier settlers located here, who may be excused if at times they fancy themselves within the frost belt of Saskatchewan rather than under the Equator. The engineers camped at this spot know what it is to break the morning ice for a wash and to hug the yule log at night; or to start work in the chill air of a dawn that renders anything but the warmest clothing unsuitable for their arctic-tropical situation.

Finally, not the least remarkable point about the great constructive enterprise under review is that amongst the tiny European population of this out-of-the-way and very young colony the contractors should have found, in Messrs. Gailey & Roberts, a local firm sufficiently capable, reputable and financially strong to act as their agents and intermediaries in this important undertaking. Many another colonial province in older parts of the Empire with ten times to even one hundred times the white population of Kenya could not produce a more reliable and efficient local business concern than this Nairobi house, whose establishment dates back to the early pre-war days of the Colony.

My first encounter with the Uasin Gishu Railway took place at Junction Camp, about five miles out of Nakuru on the Kisumu side, where, in the early stages of the work, the materials for creating the commencing sections of the line were stored. This camp is, however, to be done away with and the railway, when completed, will start right from the township of Nakuru, an arrangement that promises greater conveniences and satisfaction to everybody concerned than would be possible if the original idea of a terminus miles away had been persisted in.

It is to be hoped that a similar

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[illegible] will eventually result in the [illegible] of Eldoret being chosen for the main workshops and headquarters on the Uasin Gishu Plateau, instead of some miles out as at present designed. But the same cause which produced this change at Nakuru does not operate, unfortunately for the citizens of its leading centre, on the great flat tableland. The alteration of site in the former place is in fact due to the strong rise in elevation that takes place from Nakuru in the direction the Uganda railroad runs.

The Gradients.

It is the laudable aim of those responsible for carrying out the Uasin Gishu railway that the line shall nowhere exceed a gradient of 1.5 per cent. The effect of this rule will be to ensure for engines a hauling power not less than 15 per cent. over that they are at present able to exert on the Uganda railway. But it was found that the five mile stretch of mainline track between Nakuru and the Junction would have upset this careful calculation and all it has entailed in the surveying of the new iron road; completely nullifying the advantage aimed at; for that short piece of line reaches 2 per cent. gradient.

To-day a more level route direct from Nakuru has been chosen roughly parallel with the main line until the Junction is reached; after which it curves forward towards Eldama Ravine via the Rongai where a solid station has been created, whence, for some time past, export maize has been pouring eastwards from this fertile valley. I happened to be staying at Florida Farm, belonging to the Evans Brothers, when the first wagon loads were despatched to this station and the same enterprising group of settlers had already taken them by the forelock and established a maize flour or posho mill right alongside it.

From the direction of Nakuru Junction through Rongai station the railroad makes a dead straight run of about 12 miles past the foothills of Mounts Londiani and Eldalat. It then turns out of the Rift Valley with all its wonders and mighty views into the rising, enclosed forest country on the left. Here the really heavy work of construction begins with the clearing of primeval forest, an occasional bridge, sections of igneous rock that have had to be blasted through and earthwork cuttings or great red banks of soil, snaking in and out around the hills; all made to ensure a solid continuity in harmonious adhesion to the 1.5 per cent. gradient rule.

Headquarters.

A few miles further up at Sabatia, a healthy and beautifully situated spot for a township, the real working headquarters are situated, at any rate for the Nakuru moiety of the line. Alongside this settlement the Government authorities have established their headquarters at Naraeura, where official engineers hold a watching brief over the task of construction. From these urban places, practically on the Equator, the last complete and magnificent view of the Rift Valley, as far as Lake Baringo seventy miles away, is obtained. Henceforward, as one passes through the pleasant Eldama Ravine countryside, the spaciousness of great sun and wind swept plains is gradually exchanged for the comparative confinement of sylvan scenery towards, around and beyond Maji Mazuri; the forest township, where the saw-milling industry is supreme, and already described by me in my Londiani experiences.

After a few miles of extraordinary and difficult ant-hill land, which reminds one on an exaggerated scale of Australian grab-hole country, amongst pleasant scenery of boldly steep and sweeping hills, clad alternately in forest and vivid green the disappointing lake Nararasha

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is eventually reached. Before this pond is arrived at however, the this pond is arrived at however, the bush is abandoned, but the arduous labour, necessitated by severe remoulding of the earth's surface to make a track for the coming steel rails, continues through feathery bamboo in and out of open down-like territory, over the great divide upon which Canstaff is situated, until the grass plain of the Plateau proper is reached.

Thence all is straightforward sailing; the country to Eldoret presenting no greater difficulties than faced the Canadian Pacific Railway when it reached westwards across the vast prairies of Manitoba, Assiniboia and Alberta.

Back in the forest are the hospitals and medical bungalows of the workers occupied in this big undertaking; and here and there along the line may be met a very occasional memorial stone with its gently heaving mound that indicates the last serenely peaceful resting-place of some obscure white man, who has died in harness after perhaps a tempestuously strenuous life as a builder of railways in many out-of-the-way corners of the earth. May their spirits achieve peace beside their last job, and their bones derive some sense of rest, worthily achieved, when they feel the vibrations of the heavily loaded trains thundering down to the coast with the produce of the settlers whom they have mightily helped, till death stayed their labours, to link with civilisation and world-markets.

It was my good fortune to cover most of this route during settled fine weather that ensured a maximum mobility as well as excellent working conditions for contractors and engineers. Since my visit to the Uasin Gishu, however, an exceptionally heavy rainy season has overwhelmed the entire highlands; and it is not difficult to picture mentally the effect this must have had upon the half finished railroad construction described in the foregoing. But those who have the great enterprise in hand are staunch and experienced and not to be daunted by wash-aways, carting tracks of liquid mud, and other conditions of discouragement and discomfort.

As soon as fine weather reasserts itself, and long before the mists have permanently cleared from the more elevated country around Canstaff, they will have made good the damage; or at least have their thousands of cheery Africans armed with the regulation tin dishes—called Kerais, and which have built in their time some very big human fabrics, including the Suez Canal—hard at work repairing injuries to their embankments.

Kenya may be congratulated on the large proportion of European workers and contractors that it has been able to produce for this construction. Something like 85 per cent. are local men, the balance being specialists in their particular departments sent out from Home by Messrs. Griffiths & Co.

In the opinion of many responsible folk there is little likelihood of the terminus of this line remaining long at Turbo Valley. During my visit to the Trans Nzoia I was impressed by the faith shown locally that the railway would very shortly after passing Eldoret be at Kitale. And I remember one resident taking some pains to prove to me that it must eventually round the northern end of Mount Elgon and tap the rich resources of Upper Uganda, which include Lake Kioga and the White Nile, and link up with the Congo.

A glance at the map shows one plainly that the position of this new steelroad certainly renders it a possible section of some far greater railway system such as, to particularise, the Cape to Cairo! no that was the dream of Cecil Rhodes.

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Work Going Ahead.

At the time of writing this description the weather has happily improved to such an extent that rails are now being laid at the rate of a mile a day by almost raw labour. Canataff Station (Mile 64) has been reached; earthworks are 85 per cent. completed and with normal weather and other conditions it is anticipated that rails will be in Eldoret by the end of October and through to Turbo very early in 1924.

The loss of six weeks platelaying due to the abnormal rains made it impossible to get the rails to Lake Naraisha by the end of May as it was originally hoped to do but the programme laid down a year ago will be carried out with regard to Eldoret and Turbo as stated above.

(d) The Future of Coffee Growing, Curing and Cleaning from a Technical Standpoint.

Kenya's premier perennial crop is coffee; and notwithstanding the Colony's peculiar adaptability for yielding the finest qualities in what is really an aborigine that has travelled round the world only to come back to its homeland again, it exacts the closest attention and practical skill from the planter, who wishes to obtain not only the maximum returns from his land, but also highest prices for the finished article.

Herein lies perhaps the main fascination of coffee. It is a very valuable product and to grow and market its best grades calls forth all those most desirable human characteristics of perseverance and judgment necessary to a highly skilled profession combined with continuous, if light, physical exertion under pleasant outdoor conditions of life.

There are indeed several sectional occupations combined in coffee growing, requiring a man of exceptional intelligence, industry and experience to undertake them all with equal success. The main two departments of coffee production are (a) growing the crop and (b) preparing the bean for sale on the world's markets. Each of these businesses clearly demands specialised concentration. The first of these, coffee planting, is amongst the most intense forms of cultivation known to man and ranks, horticulturally, with the highest branches of orchard and small fruit growing. Again, the second part of the work, i.e. treating the harvested bean so as to bring out its best appearance and retain unimpaired its finest liquoring qualities, is a class of occupation that belongs essentially to the craftsman or expert manufacturer, the edge of whose skill is more surely kept keen by constant employment in his one line.

Influenced by these views it occurred to me that a visit to the Nairobi Coffee Curing Co., Ltd., situated alongside its siding near Nairobi Station, might help to elucidate the problem of the most natural future direction that Kenya's coffee production must take in its progress towards permanency and a recognised standard quality. And I came away from this concern with the impression indelibly confirmed in my mind that the operations of specialising factories, to whom the single-minded grower, intent on a maximum output, will increasingly contribute his parchment coffee, is the true line of development for this important industry.

That this point of view is almost novel may be gathered from the title of this business; for the word "Curing" is to-day considered a misnomer and if the Company were being registered at the present time its name would almost certainly be the Nairobi Coffee *Cleaning Co.*, Ltd., It is of course out of the question for this institution to receive freshly picked coffee berry; or undertake the preliminary process of pulping and drying to parchment coffee the bean expressed therefrom. This

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simple process is the true "curing" and belongs to the planter's operations. In itself it requires close attention to carry out to perfection. But all the subsequent cleaning treatment of the dried bean delivered in its parchment covering to the factory is technical; although the greatest skill in the world cannot turn badly "cured" parchment into a first-class product.

Both the Secretary, Mr. H. Bargman, and the technical Manager of these Works, Capt. A. J. Sinclair, afforded me every facility for a careful inspection of the milling and cleaning processes from the moment each consignment is received, weighed, ticketed, tested to see its stage of dryness and sent on its tortuous journey up and down or through all the multitudinous chutes, elevators, barrels, passages and machines of this extensive establishment. And consignments are constantly coming in by truck-load, by wagon from the neighbouring goods sheds or by transport from Kiambu and other nearby districts, now that picking and pulping are in full swing.

Co-operation.

The normal routine of this useful concern is to treat all parchment sent to them by rotation in the order of its arrival. To expedite cleaning and encourage remunerative prices the management ask clients to co-operate by supplying uniformly dried consignments. If difficulties, however, are experienced owing to inclement weather, then all parchment should be uniformly dried to the "black stage" (i.e. parchment that has been in the sun for two or three days) and then as far advanced on that as they can manage. This, though an onerous task, should not be impossible, as many plantations have already, in previous seasons made provision for drying the whole of their parchment to ensure safe passage to London for the treatment in the cleaning mills there. This has been accomplished without resort to any form of mechanical dryers.

The factory prefers to receive large consignments at any one time and when drying is required ratios of from 30/32 bags of one class are desirable as charges for the dryer. Planters attending scrupulously to these requirements have the material satisfaction of getting their coffee evenly dried and cleaned in the quickest possible time right through to the finished stage; and turned into its finest quality their output is capable of reaching.

The cost of treatment here for lots of two tons and over, is at the rate of Sh. 80/- per ton; but a substantial rebate on a sliding scale according to quantity is granted to those contracting to send in their whole crop. As a rule two bags of parchment finally work out at one bag of the finished product; so that if good bags are supplied in the first instance they suffice, after being turned inside out and thoroughly cleaned, to carry the crop in double bags to the overseas market.

All machinery installed in this factory has been either specially designed or selected by the creators of the Company,—in conjunction with that clever specialist on coffee machinery, Mr. John Gordon, who visited Nairobi last year,—for East African requirements, and a remarkably complete and efficient plant in first-class working order, electrically driven, is the result.

The first step taken on the arrival of a consignment is to check the number of bags and registered weight against the Way Bill or Delivery Note. Each bag is individually weighed and it is here that any great disparity in weight will reveal, with uniformly filled bags, any error that may inadvertently have occurred in the making up of the consignment, e.g. a bag or two of wet or float parchment which obviously should not have been included unless specially distin-

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weighed. The details of the official receipt are embodied on a treatment card which henceforth contains all relative data until it finally reflects the completed outturn of the consignment and is filed for future reference.

The dry parchment then passes through a new mechanical device called the parchment separator. By this means all oversized beans, mhuni and any matter too big or inappropriate for normal treatment with the ordinary flat beans are rejected, to be handled separately elsewhere. This simplifies and minimises the subsequent hand-picking.

One valuable part of the Nairobi Coffee Curing Co.'s routine in dealing with consignments entrusted to them is the detailed report they get out for each client and for their own guidance on the preliminary condition, the incidents of cleaning and the final quality of each consignment treated. By means of this report the grower is able to put his finger on the weaknesses of his methods of pulping and preparation; and, as subsequent, entirely independent London reports are sure to come to hand in due course, it provides him with early data of considerable technical value and proves the confidence the management possess in their own expert knowledge and experience. Anyway the Company possesses in Capt. Sinclair a coffee specialist of the highest intelligence and zeal who is also a thoroughly trained and capable engineer, and they do not fear to pit their ability to pass judgment on all classes or grades of this crop with any other expert them.

Ingenious Devices.

An interesting branch of the treatment of the parchment prior to hulling are the devices for extracting dust and metallic substances. It is remarkable what curious fragments of iron, nails, charms, bibi's broken ear ornaments, etc., are caught by the sieves, magnets and other traps over which each entire consignment is made to pass.

The management here do not believe in too high polishing for the cleaned coffee bean as it undoubtedly tends, by the development of frictional heat, in driving to the surface and dissipating a proportion of the essential oil upon which the liquoring quality depends.

From the hulling and the process following immediately after, quite sufficient polish is obtained to satisfy the practical buyer; the coffee then passes on to the graders, fitted with specially designed sieves, which sort the varying sizes of beans, both according to width and thickness, into the compartments to which they rightly belong; and it has been found that this installation is giving specially satisfactory results in preserving a high ratio of "A" grade in good, bold coffee.

Hand-picking is thoroughly attended to and travelling band tables enable every bag of bold coffee to be exposed and picked clean of foreign substances that may have escaped previous treatment, such as maize, as well as broken, marked or damaged coffee beans. It is obvious however that with badly marked and damaged coffee this picking can only ensure the most noticeably defective beans being eradicated,—but gold cannot be expected from dross. With first class consignments the coffee is brought to the highest standard.

A perfect system of card index filing keeps the management in closest touch with all particulars of every consignment from each Estate, the basis of which is a comprehensive outturn statement. This statement consists of a large sheet giving at a glance, under specially ruled headings, all the details of its history including report, number of sacks, brand and factory marks, from the time the consignment is received until it is carefully checked into the truck at the

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factory's backdoor and despatched to the selling agent.

It is not desirable to weary my readers with too much technical detail. But a visit to this ably managed, efficiently run establishment, with its growing clientele of satisfied planters must convince the unbiassed that the best interests of the coffee industry lie in the frank co-operation of coffee-growers with a central factory such as this, equipped regardless of expense with the latest and most perfect machinery and controlled by experts who have nothing else to attend to, rather than in the older idea that it is better for the industry for every cultivator of this crop to have his own factory, through which to put his parchment to the best of his by no means always technically perfect knowledge.

To those who believe that the expansion of the European race in Africa, and especially in Kenya, is the only means by which a permanent and enlightened civilisation can be established here, this conclusion will give much satisfaction. It is only a matter of time before the creation of small, intensive, coffee plantations, should be within the reach of men of our race with only comparatively slender means. Expense of costly coffee-cleaning machinery will be entirely obviated to the individual in the near future; and even pulping may be greatly cheapened, improved and simplified by introducing some plan of co-operation between small growers. Nearly every agricultural industry in the world has been susceptible to co-operation. Why not coffee?

(a) Glimpses of European Life Around Nairobi, and the Development of Semi-Urban Land.

To all who take a lively interest in the hitherto unparalleled colonisation feat of establishing a Northern community under the Equator, the desire must frequently arise to understand how normal Anglo-Saxon domesticity is acting itself to its strange environment here.

The business man of Nairobi imported from the suburbs of London or cities of like character, if addicted to gardening as so many sedentary workers are at home—for nearly every Englishman believes himself to be a heaven-sent cultivator of the soil—finds that his usually more ample surroundings, superior climatic conditions, and greater leisure in Kenya enable him to perform miracles in flower and vegetable growing during East African rains. But this is generally only a passing phase and the bulk of our urban population soon delegates its self-imposed duties in this direction to a shamba boy and with a gesture of contempt for such bucolic occupations devotes its energies to tennis or golf.

Nevertheless, here and there is to be found an exception to whom the creation of orderly beauty or utility from the wilderness is an absorbing pastime; while others, seized with the possibilities of constructive spare-time occupation, through the medium of carefully supervised native labour, embark on ambitious schemes of landscape designing and semi-suburban land development.

To the latter category belongs Mr. J. H. S. Todd, whose menage is on the lower Kabete Road, four miles west of Parklands Police Station; and I venture to describe the environment that this well-known Nairobi business man has produced on his little estate of 87 acres as picturing a conspicuous example of the fascinating hobbies that are available to permanent residents of Kenya's capital.

Hobbies.

Along a quarter of a mile drive over richest Kyambu soil lined with adolescent eucalyptus, one reaches a rambling, old-fashioned bungalow, containing an abundance of spacious cool rooms replete with comfortable, home-making things,

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including the telephone to town, and an electric-light installation. This is the original homestead of some earlier pioneer doubtless; and is shortly to be replaced by a substantial mansion of stone, quarried on the property, which will arise on a site adjoining the present residence.

Around the old bungalow the vivid verdure of Kikuyu grass lawns is set off by the deep mellow brown of broad, ironstone gravelled, motor-car tracks; the whole being exquisitely shaded by a few giant native trees, intermingled with more youthful but choice exotics that may supplant the former in some future century. At the present time they together afford delightful surroundings for open-air afternoon tea within easy reach of the tennis-court.

An avenue, containing a number of different selected treelings, mainly from Australia, and carpeted with short yielding greensward, most pleasant to walk upon, extends beyond the terrain of the residence, demarcated by trim flowering hedges.

On either side of this young avenue are lush meadow paddocks; the bulk of the property being in process of conversion into rich pasture from which all extraneous growth of scrub and forest has been entirely removed. The only cultivation on the estate indeed consists of 14 acres of coffee and some citrus planted on the banks of a small natural lake where wild duck frequently occur—probably to the occasional benefit of the family menu.

There is an interesting object beside spaciousness and beauty, or the maintenance of a few well-fed family cows, behind Mr. Todd's pasture creating. In a rough circle running practically round the outer edge of the whole property a racing track is being laid down; for the owner evidently possesses that love and admiration of the horse which is so prominent a trait of the British character. And down a slope at the back of the afore-mentioned bungalow a magnificent, capacious, stone, racing-stable is approaching completion, the like of which does not exist elsewhere in Kenya.

In these stables, with their eighteen big loose-boxes, an adequate interior courtyard, a strong entrance gate—I had almost written portcullis—and roomy upper storeys in which fodder may be stored and the attendants to the horses live, an important section of Kenya's up-country equine racing aristocrats will presently be housed whenever the Turf Club has a series of events to be contested on the Nairobi racecourse. And Mr. Todd, in his delightful suburban home will have added pleasure and profit of seeing from time to time his estate populated by candidates and adherents of the world's premier sport, his carefully created pasture paddocks stocked with selected specimens of the finest creature in existence next to man himself and his racing track the practice ground and testing place for many of Kenya's equine winners.

Another Example.

There are other phases of European domesticity, however, just as fascinating as that portrayed above; and no description of how the white world of Kenya lives would be complete without a sketch of normal family life around the capital of the Colony.

Only four-and-a-half miles east of Nairobi on the Athi Plains lies the pleasant residence of Doonholm, surrounded by an extensive grazing estate. Here, on the ample area of 4,600 acres, is run one of the chief milk-supply businesses of Nairobi by a real old-timer of Kenya, Mr. J. K. Watson, a Scotsman who farms these congenial surroundings after a number of years spent as pioneer building contractor in Nairobi before the bulk of its present inhabitants had arrived in the Colony.

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Amongst other pieces of work undertaken by Mr. Watson in the earlier days of settlement were laying the foundations of Sixth Avenue, putting up many of the largest buildings in Nairobi and district such as Muthaiga, and the National Bank of India; as well as the cathedral at Kampala, and the O.C. Ordinance workshops during the great war.

Doonholm estate consists entirely of the popularly despised black cotton soil; and it possesses here a blackness and cohesion that there can be no gainsaying. Across this a metal road had to be built three or four miles in length before this pioneer could assure himself from being marooned at his homestead for weeks at a time in wet weather. Yet on this soil he has grown excellent crops, of maize, wheat and oats, and—what is more surprising—he has a deciduous orchard planted in it amongst which, on one small tree 5 feet high, I counted 22 apples.

Whatever arguments may be raised for or against the cultivation of black soil one thing is certain, namely, that excellent pasture, mainly red oat grass, grows luxuriantly upon it. At the time of my visit hay-making was in full swing in a meadow alongside the eucalyptus drive that leads to the substantial double-storied house—also the handiwork of the owner—and the scent of new-mown grass together with the entire surroundings spoke so strongly of the Old Country on a warm day in June or July that the effect might easily have brought the tears of homeland reminiscence to the eyes of an emotional onlooker. An old, old English song welled up from some forgotten brain cell as I watched; and for the next half-hour the words and lilt of "Where is now the merry party I remember long ago?" flowed irresistibly through my mind.

Happy, vigorous children were running about busily intent upon assisting in the harvest; one sturdy little tom-boy of a girl actually driving a pair of oxen and doing so. Across the avenue a crop of slick, yellow-green, satin-smooth teff grass—an Abyssinian bread-making grain—was ripening; a ration of the greatest value in the dairy sheds, surpassing even lucerne in its milk stimulating qualities; and behind this again were poultry runs, piggeries, barns and the big, commodious byres themselves.

To the writer's thinking the greatest marvel in this cheerful home is the normal, British humanity of it all. The jolly thirteen-year-old schoolboy son, a day-pupil at Nairobi's Government school, where he is proving himself no slouch, seriously intent, after a week's immersion in educational tasks, on getting the bearings of the latest incidents amongst the stock; and then proudly taking down the Ford car and putting it together again—an accomplishment that he has acquired thoroughly—to seek for some suspected, but possibly imaginary, trouble.

This same lad, when his father was indisposed recently, rose unasked before 4 a.m. and saw to the milking in his stead. Later in the day I found him solitarily thumping out his homework on an old typewriter he has unearthed somewhere and put to rights. Then the eldest girl, who also attends the same school with her brother, visibly rejoicing in her week-end freedom under her parents' roof; for whom the Mombasa children's seaside trip held no attraction that could compare for an instant with the delights of homestead and farm. Surely there is something that counteracts and transcends any real or imaginary evils of our often maligned equatorial climate, with its supposedly injurious actinic rays, at work in such a home; for these youngsters are in every respect, absorbed, invigorated and stimulated by their environment and can challenge comparison physically or mentally with the best of British juveniles, either at

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home or in the great dominions. It was, doubtless, parent-craft of this nature—almost an extinct art today, yet nevertheless possibly the greatest primary art of all—that in dim, far-off days brought our race safely through the Ice Age and other inconceivably dreadful conditions. Scarce as it may be it is again parent-craft of this description, far more than wordy delegatious and interminable conventions, that is ensuring the future of a white Africa. Notwithstanding the many natural or artificially created obstacles that the unprivileged home-making pioneer has to contend with.

One pre-occupied, energetic little girl of eleven has made her own the duty—during all her spare waking moments—of looking after the horses and young stock, concerning which she is prematurely wise in every detail. That this is no sinecure may be gathered when it is stated that Mr. Watson owns 18 horses, polo and country-bred youngsters, mostly by Referee with a few by Scottie and one by Wise Dove; and from amongst them a team might pick good mounts for the sport of kings. But the group of milch cows over 100 strong is the piece de resistance of this estate, which carries the oldest dairy herd in Kenya; and many a Nairobi child and invalid have thriven and grown strong on the rich milk that comes out of Doonholm byres. Indeed numbers of infants have been reared on it.

The breed mainly favoured on Doonholm is the Ayrshire and all cows in profit are hailed up by chains attached to posts at the head of their roomy stalls, which they know and walk into without the least trouble. It is ten years now since the first Ayrshire cows in calf were imported to this estate, and some of them are alive to-day.

Mr. Watson's first bull was Ardyne Fancy, formerly the imported stud bull at Naivasha Government Farm. He came from McAllister, Scotland, and was champion in his time in Kenya after having been a prize-winner at home. Other bulls used in this herd include "Nethercraig Silverstar I"; "Auchenbraine XIII"; "Doonholme Browne," dam "Barcheshie Jenny," imported, by "Auchenbraine No. 2," E.A.S.B., etc. It follows that an excellent strain of strong-constitutioned, heavy-milking pure-bred Ayrshires are to be found here.

Milking in the clean, well-paved, airy cowsheds takes place at noon, and again at 4 a.m.; for milk has to be delivered twice daily and one must be at work betimes to supply the breakfast or tea tables in Nairobi. It is a pleasure to saunter through the warm byres at night, sweet with the fragrant breath of cud-chewing kine, and see the work going forward silently and expeditiously. An excellent dairy is also to be found here; built of hollow concrete walls, tile roof and cement floor.

Kenya's First Dip.

The oldest dip in Kenya is on this farm; for the owner, with remarkable prescience, realised the importance of this form of protection against East Coast fever even before the Veterinary Department did. Indeed Colonel Stordy, in the earlier days of Kenya, more than once used this dip for demonstration purposes and lectured upon it to stock-owners who were invited out to inspect the novelty. Since then Mr. Watson has built many dips in different parts of Kenya.

Some distance east of the homestead a very fine, permanent waterhole exists evidently fed by a strong spring. In pre-European times all this country was periodically overrun by the blood-drinking, raiding Masai and this pool, being the only reliable drinking place for miles round was then much requisitioned. During the recent dry seasons it has been the farm's main stand-by; but better seasons are now returning and it is to be hoped that both

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in pasture and remunerative markets a rosier time lies ahead of the Doonholm estate than has been experienced of late.

This home is a popular place of call for many Nairobians looking for a short run into the clear, healthy air of the plains during the week-end; and the hospitality of the inmates seems inexhaustible. Here is one of the few places known to the writer in Kenya where music takes a leading and honoured part in the relaxations and distractions of evening sociability.

When the mistress of the house takes her place at the piano one may be sure of an hour's unalloyed pleasure amongst the favourite songs of the British people; the old songs are duly honoured, and to a few of us they will always be the best. On the occasion of my visit the challenge was humorously flung amongst the assembled party to find a song so old as to be unknown to the instrumentalist. Believing I held an ace and king of trumps in "My grandfather's clock" and "Pop goes the weasel" I confidently joined the competition, only to be ignominiously defeated in the first round.

So normal, jovial, British family life has been established, exists and will continue at Doonholm, the popular dairy estate, out on the great Athi Plains, recently in complete possession of lion, zebra and gazelle. One can only regret that, owing to our peculiar methods of land settlement combined with a pawky, unnatural sentiment against the expansion of our own race, the vast area between Nairobi and the Mua Hills has not been filled long ago with similar self-supporting homes; whence well-paid employment, the beneficial influences of an economically sound civilisation and the example of a natural beneficent, human plan of life might be radiated to many primitive Africans, where previously no human being lived and no material wealth whatever was created for the support of mankind.

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AUTHOR'S FINAL NOTE.

The following remarks are designed to anticipate and reduce to strictly essential matters the inevitable flow of correspondence that follows the publication of information such as is contained in the foregoing pages. That this easily can become a heavy task to a publicist may be judged by the aftermath of the lecture on Kenya delivered in London by the author (December 1920) before the Royal Colonial Institute, when something in the neighbourhood of 120 letters, many demanding exhaustive replies, were received.

Being able to adequately occupy himself in the two-fold business of private literary work and developing his own property in Kenya, the author does not invite gratuitous correspondence. Nevertheless, a long practical experience in dealing with pioneering, farming and land settlement difficulties having left him with a residuum of expert knowledge, he is prepared to give conscientious attention to the queries and needs of enquirers on these subjects and answer them by the earliest possible post, provided a postal order for £1 sterling as proof of bona-fides be in every case enclosed with the original interrogatories. It must, however, be borne in mind that the author is not a land agent and has nothing to sell. His main function can only be to safeguard correspondents to the best of his ability from foolish investments of a nature likely to be wasteful, extravagant and unremunerative. The author's services in the above direction, if requisitioned, are likely to be of the greatest value to those adults who are personally looking for properties or suitable openings, more particularly on the land, as principals or part owners; pensioned officials or retired officers seeking residential properties; and also to parents or guardians who desire to place youths as working pupils in positions where they may learn practical farming or planting with reasonable prospects of becoming self-supporting and eventually soundly established.

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FARMING BY PROXY.

Apart from the above causes for correspondence one other important reason—judging by previous experience—may bring letters to the author's post-bag. A strong desire to invest in some sound, profitable and growing industry in a new field such as East Africa offers, exists in many minds; even though there may be no intention of personally settling in or visiting the colony. To meet this demand in its simplest and safest form and directly benefit the colony productively at the same time the author, after making careful enquiry in the various districts through which his travels have led him, and finding ample opportunity for their materialisations, has drafted the following proposals for enabling even small investors to participate in annual crop production by proxy, more particularly maize growing, for the inexhaustible export trade; together with provision for a year's free practical training in economic land-work for those requiring it.

The system of proxy farming adopted enable anybody to own, or have an interest in, a complete team and outfit capable of cultivating approximately 100 acres of arable land; and the opportunity to buy any land so worked on which an option has been obtained, not already earmarked by others, at the end of the investment period. The investor receives a definite and remunerative annual share of the crop produced by the said team set aside and sold for him as dividend.

Detailed estimates of cost are not given here because prices fluctuate constantly and the expenses of cultivation vary according to districts; a careful estimate, eliminating all overhead charges, made by the Kenya Land Settlement Advisory Committee and given on p. 72 of their official pamphlet places the expenditure of a single individual at £624.12.0 starting by himself on 100 acres of maize land. At the moment of writing oxen are fetching up to £10 per head; and treble-furrow disc ploughs may be purchased new for £48 in Nairobi stores.

Figures, however, are likely to be much modified by the amount of co-operation it is possible to arrange by grouping teams or by special agreement with land-owners and farmers. The inclusive investment per team, after careful consultation with local authorities, has been fixed at £500 and the annual nett return to the investor at one-eighth of the gross crop.

It is believed that this plan will assist to popularise more widely the superior attractions and opportunities that East Africa offers to the outside world and place them at least on a parity with more skilfully advertised countries such as South Africa, Australia and British Columbia.

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The necessary outlay for establishing and maintaining a full equipment or unit-team of oxen, plough, planter, barrows, sheller, cart, wagon, maize-cribs, etc. (or share in some of these), and meeting incidental expenses in connection therewith, in order to lease for five years and farm annually an average area of arable land per team, (working preferably in groups of at least ten teams for purposes of economic control and pooled dividend earning), harvest same, and provide pasture for the cattle, being placed at £500, a special Trust Account will be opened with one or other of the Banks having a branch in Nairobi, into which all sums submitted by one or more persons, in units of £500 each, for this purpose, will be paid. The assistance of a firm of reputable Accountants in Nairobi will be arranged for and audited accounts submitted to the investors every year. The security for these sums will be the outfit and teams purchased therewith, the ownership of which will be vested in trustees immediately after purchase, a substantial sinking fund based on the crops annually produced thereby, and certain other safeguards explained later. Good maize-growing land will be secured for a period of five years, preferably near the line; where possible in continuous blocks and on easy terms—or option of purchase, especially when it is suitable for coffee or other remunerative crops; so that any of the investors may make selection of same at the end of the maize-growing period, if they desire. All the mischance of agricultural life and this investment will be covered for grouped teams (a) by securing whatever insurance against abnormal loss by drought or of working oxen can be arranged, reasonably during the first two years (b) by a substantial joint sinking fund, contributed to by all teams working under the author's control and (c) by the margin of enhancement in value of the land secured under option or easy purchase for each group; an enhancement that may be expected to amount to between 100 to 200 per cent. during the five years. Separate teams, not grouped, when placed under an agreement ensuring their efficient upkeep until the end of the term of five years will still be parties to the joint sinking fund which will bear the responsibility of reimbursing any unusual depreciation or loss in the assets during this period.

The author will himself take full responsibility for investing moneys, finding land and arranging for its profitable farming; a task which he will undertake wherever possible in conjunction with trustworthy, successful men in each district having specialised local knowledge. All books and records will be placed in the keeping of reliable business managing agents or professional secretaries.

Moneys subscribed will be used strictly for the purposes explained and must remain so invested for five years. Applications to join the first group of ten teams, their dividends to be pooled, are herewith invited; and the full scheme will not be put into operation until a minimum of ten teams, whose individuality will be maintained notwithstanding their grouping, has been subscribed for on these terms. In order to encourage the formation

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complete groups amongst friends or relations, and relieve him of the task of arranging the grouping, the author will, in every case in which ten or more complete units, of £500 per unit-team, are subscribed for investment under this system of proxy-farming by one or more persons, select a special area for them and guarantee an extra dividend of 25 per cent. of the nett profits—after refunding their original capital at the end of the five year term—arising out of the enhancement of the land worked by such complete group. Odd teams may, however, be accepted and, at the discretion of the author, be either put to work singly on 100-acre plots under his own immediate care or placed for five years with approved substantial farmers willing to comply with all the author's necessary requirements for protecting the investor; and in every case an independent dividend of one eighth of the gross crop produced will be declared on the team or teams working in isolation. Farming work will be carried out under the control of practical reliable men, preferably with local experience, who will be responsible to the author and the said business agents or secretaries, subject to the audit of the Chartered Accountants.

One full eighth share gross of the resulting harvest each year shall be set aside and sold without deduction of any kind as the exclusive property and annual dividend of the investor, or party of investors, financing each team or group of teams. The average returns of maize in East Africa, including native crops, being 8 bags per acre, which normally fetches about Shs. 10/- per bag, this share promises a return in the neighbourhood of 9 per cent. or 10 per cent. per annum, rising—if 10, 12 or more bags per acre be secured, a by no means uncommon yield in several districts to a possible 20 per cent. per annum. Numerous instances of 20 bags to the acre are on record, and there has been no complete failure of the European maize crop in any district in Kenya since the Colony's occupation by whitemen. It must, however, be remembered that the first year of breaking up new land is that of the greatest difficulties and poorest yields; as land mellows with cultivation the yield usually increases, and it is believed that there is an excellent prospect of earning an average return equal to 12 per cent. p.a. for investors over the period of five years.

At the end of five years, the land may be given up and the money invested returned, on 6 months' notice from either side having been previously given; in which case the exact amount invested and no more will be repaid to the investor in full except in the case of special, self grouping investors as already explained, who are entitled to a further dividend; or the same or a new area may be secured for a further term of five years, or bought outright. The seven-eighths of each year's crops not belonging to the investor shall bear all running expenses, maintenance, rent, wages, purchase instalments of land, transport—often a heavy item—remuneration of the author, etc., including the joint sinking fund to which every team will contribute, consisting of 10 per cent. for the first two years and 20 per cent. for the remaining years, of the gross output

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of all the crops as an insurance against loss of stock or equipment and towards cash repayment at end of fifth year of the original sum invested. In the event of suitable land not being found on terms of rental or sharing that the author believes to be safe and profitable he reserves the right to return the money in full to the investor, less transmission expenses. To participate in the nearest and earliest planting season the full sum of £500 for each unit of team and outfit must be remitted not less than six months before one or other of the two rainy seasons which occur in Kenya, i.e., April and October, together with a clear unreserved acceptance in writing of the conditions of this scheme, as explained in this statement; and no applicant will be included in land secured on lease, or any other arrangements entered into on his behalf, until this full amount and this acceptance have been received and the former paid into the said Trust Account. Considerable areas of excellent land have already been offered for this system of farming; but it is clearly impossible to definitely secure any blocks until the means for cultivating them are forthcoming. In the interests of good farming the author cannot guarantee the utilisation of more than one season each year and a maximum of 100 acres under crop with the minimum £500 per unit team he is making provision for, though he will experiment at increasing this output. If any success be achieved, however, only 5 per cent. gross of the excess crop will be contributed to investors in the unit-teams concerned; the balance, both from this source and from enhancement in land-values resulting from the cultivation of grouped teams, being used to swell sinking fund account and as a reward for efficiency amongst the working personnel who produce these desirable results.

In the event of market, soil or local conditions making a change of crop necessary; or, likely, in the author's opinion, to be more profitable than maize; he reserves the right to vary the product grown. And he also reserves the power to transfer the control of this scheme to a Board or Committee of reputable business men with expert agricultural knowledge or a trust company registered under limited liability, if the work proves too much for him.

In order to permit the scheme to be of service to those wishing to learn practical economic agriculture the author will arrange for one year's free training in ploughing and cultivation — which are the bases of all good farming and planting—with these teams on reasonable conditions, which the author will formulate for candidates, to any investor (or his son) who has financed, or been nominated by the owners of, not less than two teams. Such training will not however be eligible, except by special consent, until these teams have been at work for two years. Once acclimatised and acquainted with the native language, those shewing capacity and reliability may be offered well-paid employment under this scheme after training, if an opening can be found for them, or they will be recommended for any suitable situation that may occur; and rations will be allowed to learners who at any time prove themselves capable of looking after a team to the satisfaction

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of the white man in charge. Failing more permanent accommodation, camping grounds will be provided for investors eligible for training, so that no greater hardships than are common to ordinary safari life will be experienced and living expenses need not be heavy.

All correspondence in connection with the above must be addressed to:—

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